LOVE LETTERS

OF

FAMOUS MEN AND WOMEN

OF THE

Past and Present Century

EDITED BY

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TWO VOLUMES

WITH PORTRAITS

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LOVE LETTERS

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT

1797

The history of this highly gifted woman,—the mother of Mary Shelley, the poet's wife—was as eventful as it was romantic. Born at Hoxton, on April 27, 1759, her childhood and girlish days were saddened and blighted by the cruelty and drunkenness of her father, whose unnatural conduct eventually drove her from home. After going through a succession of vicissitudes, she fell in love with Fuseli, the painter,—though a married man—but not meeting with any return to her passion, she went to France where she met an American, Captain Gilbert Imlay. His attention and kindness soon aroused feelings of affection in Mary Wollstonecraft; and, ere long,

she became devotedly attached to him; her tender trustful heart yielding itself completely to his influence and power. He, too, professed to have the same love for her; and while she considered herself his wife unto death, he addressed her as such in his letters. But the story that follows is the old old one. Another record of a life almost hopelessly wrecked and ruined by a misdirected love. The letters quoted below show how gradually she found her lover's affection growing colder and colder until at last he treated her with indifference and neglect. These poor tear stained letters—full of passionate joy, and acute sadness, were the expression of a heart bleeding with anguish, and well-nigh broken with despair.

Their intense earnestness, too, is all the more pathetic and distressing when we remember that they were in the end as dead and lifeless words to him who had promised to be so true—so faithful. —They could not touch the heart that had lost its sense of right, and dared—under the very roof which sheltered the mother and her child—to bestow its love on another. Such a crisis was a maddening blow; and with her mind unhinged and brain on fire, she went out, in the dark loneliness of night to die. On Putney Bridge she wandered in the soaking rain; and,

ere she made the fatal plunge, waited for her clothes to be so saturated that they might the more easily 'drag her down to muddy death.'

But happily she was rescued by a Thames boatman, and her life saved. Eventually she married William Godwin, one of the most remarkable men of his time, and died in giving birth to her daughter. She was buried in St Pancras Churchyard in London, and it was by her grave where she was accustomed to sit and read, that Shelley sought out Mary Godwin, and asked her to become his wife.

The love letters of Mary Wollstonecraft, which had been returned to her by Imlay, were published after her death by Godwin, from which we quote the following:—

[*Paris, August*, 1793]
Past Twelve o'clock, Monday Night.

I obey an emotion of my heart, which made me think of wishing thee, my love, good night! before I go to rest, with more tenderness than I can to-morrow, when writing a hasty line or two under Colonel ——'s eye. You can scarcely imagine with what pleasure I anticipate the day, when we are to begin almost to live together; and you would smile to hear how many plans of employment I have in my head, now that I am

confident my heart has found peace in your bosom.

Cherish me with that dignified tenderness which I have only found in you: and your own dear girl will try to keep under a quickness of feeling that has sometimes given you pain. Yes, I will be *good* that I may deserve to be happy; and whilst you love me I cannot again fall into the miserable state which rendered life a burthen almost too heavy to be borne.

But, good night! God bless you! Sterne says that is equal to a kiss. Yet, I would rather give you the kiss into the bargain, glowing with gratitude to Heaven, and affection to you. I like the word affection, because it signifies something habitual; and we are soon to meet, to try whether we have mind enough to keep our hearts warm.

The next letter was written during a separation of several months, during which Imlay was chiefly at Havre.

[*Paris, December* 1793.]
Friday Morning.

I am glad to find that other people can be unreasonable as well as myself, for be it known to thee, that I answered thy *first* letter the very

night it reached me (Sunday) though thou couldst not receive it before Wednesday, because it was not sent off till the next day. There is a full, true, and particular account.

Yet I am not angry with thee, my love, for I think that it is a proof of stupidity, and, likewise, of a milk-and-water affection, which comes to the same thing, when the temper is governed by a square and a compass. There is nothing picturesque in this straight-lined equality, and the passions always give grace to the actions.

Recollection now makes my heart bound to thee; but, it is not to thy money-getting face, though I cannot be seriously displeased with the exertion which increases my esteem, or rather is what I should have expected from thy character. No; I have thy honest countenance before me—Pop—relaxed by tenderness; a little—little wounded by my whims; and thy eyes glistening with sympathy.

Thy lips then feel softer than soft, and I rest my cheek on thine, forgetting all the world. I have not left the hue of love out of the picture—the rosy glow; and fancy has spread it over my own cheeks, I believe, for I feel them burning, whilst a delicious tear trembles in my eye, that would be all your own, if a grateful emotion, directed to the Father of Nature, who has made

me thus alive to happiness, did not give more warmth to the sentiment it divides. I must pause a moment.

Need I tell you that I am tranquil after writing thus? I do not know why, but I have more confidence in your affection, when absent, than present; nay, I think that you must love me, for, in the sincerity of my heart let me say it, I believe I deserve your tenderness, because I am true, and have a degree of sensibility that you can see and relish.—Yours sincerely,

MARY.

Paris, January, 1794. *Monday Night.*

I have just received your kind and rational letter, and would fain hide my face, glowing with shame for my folly. I would hide in your bosom, if you would again open it to me, and nestle closely till you bade my fluttering heart be still, by saying that you forgave me.

With eyes overflowing with tears, and in the humblest attitude, I intreat you. Do not turn from me, for indeed I love you fondly, and have been very wretched since the night I was so cruelly hurt by thinking that you had no confidence in me. It is time for you to grow more reasonable, a few more of these caprices of sensi

bility would destroy me. I have, in fact, been very much indisposed for a few days past, and the notion that I was tormenting, or perhaps killing, a poor little animal, about whom I am grown anxious and tender, now I feel it alive, made me worse. . . .

Ah! do not continue to be angry with me. You perceive that I am already smiling through my tears. You have lightened my heart, and my frozen spirits are melting into playfulness.

Write the moment you receive this. I shall count the minutes. But drop not an angry word. I cannot now bear it. Yet, if you think I deserve a scolding (it does not admit of a question, I grant), wait till you come back, and then, if you are angry one day, I shall be sure of seeing you the next.

—— did not write to you, I suppose, because he talked of going to Havre. Hearing that I was ill, he called very kindly on me, not dreaming that it was some words that he incautiously let fall, which rendered me so.

God bless you, my love; do not shut your heart against a return of tenderness; and, as I now in fancy cling to you, be more than ever my support. Feel but as affectionate when you read this letter as I did when writing it, and you will make happy, your

MARY.

It would seem, from some of the correspondence, that there were little misunderstandings, although we are not told of what nature they were. In the next letter she signs herself 'Mary Imlay.'

Paris, January, 1794.
Thursday Night.

I have been wishing the time away, my kind love, unable to rest till I knew that my penitential letter had reached your hand; and this afternoon when your tender epistle of Tuesday gave such exquisite pleasure to your poor sick girl, her heart smote her to think that you were still to receive another cold one.

Burn it also, my dearest, yet do not forget that even those letters were full of love; and I shall ever recollect that you did not wait to be mollified by my penitence, before you took me again to your heart.

I have been unwell, and would not, now I am recovering, take the journey, because I have been seriously alarmed and angry with myself, dreading continually the fatal consequence of my folly. But, should you think it right to remain at Havre, I shall find some opportunity in the course of a fortnight or less perhaps, to come to you, and before then I shall be strong again.

Yet do not be uneasy! I am really better, and never took such care of myself as I have done since you restored my peace of mind. The girl is come to warm my bed, so I will tenderly say good night! and write a line or two in the morning.

Morning.

I wish you were here to talk with me this fine morning! yet your absence shall not prevent me. I have stayed at home too much; though, when I was so dreadfully out of spirits, I was careless of everything.

I will now sally forth (you will go with me in my heart) and try whether this fine bracing air will not give vigour to the poor babe it had before I so inconsiderately gave way to the grief that deranged my bowels and gave a turn to my whole system.—Yours truly,

MARY IMLAY.

The next letter was written in prospect of seeing Imlay:—

[*Paris, February* 1794]
Tuesday Morning.

I seize this opportunity to inform you, that I am to set out on Thursday with Mr——, and hope to tell you soon (on your lips) how glad I

shall be to see you. I have just got my passport, so I do not foresee any impediment to my reaching Havre, to bid you good night next Friday in my new apartment, where I am to meet you and love, in spite of care, to smile me to sleep, for I have not caught much rest since we parted.

You have by your tenderness and worth twisted yourself more artfully round my heart than I supposed possible. Let me indulge the thought that I have thrown out some tendrils to cling to the elm by which I wish to be supported. This is talking a new language for me! But knowing that I am not a parasite-plant, I am willing to receive the proofs of affection, that every pulse replies to, when I think of being once more in the same house with you. God bless you!—Yours truly,

MARY.

On March 11, after a brief union of about a fortnight, Imlay returned to Paris, and on the next day the following letter was written:—

Havre, Thursday Morning,
March 12.

We are such creatures of habit, my love, that though I cannot say I was sorry, childishly so, for your going, when I knew that you were to

stay such a short time, and I had a plan of employment, yet I could not sleep. . . . I took my walk before breakfast, though the weather was not inviting—and here I am, wishing you a finer day, and seeing you peep over my shoulder, as I write, with one of your kindest looks—when your eyes glisten, and a suffusion creeps over your relaxing features.

But I do not mean to dally with you this morning. So God bless you! Take care of yourself, and sometimes fold to your heart your affectionate

MARY.

About the end of April, 1794, Mary gave birth to a daughter, and in the following September, a separation of many months took place, to which no cordial meeting ever succeeded. Many of these letters have a tinge of sadness.

[*Paris*, 1794]. *Evening, Sept.* 23.

I have been playing and laughing with the little girl so long, that I cannot take up my pen to address you without emotion. Pressing her to my bosom, she looked so like you (*entre nous*, your best looks, for I do not admire your commercial face), every nerve seemed to vibrate to

the touch, and I began to think that there was something in the assertion of man and wife being one—for you seemed to pervade my whole frame, quickening the beat of my heart, and lending me the sympathetic tears you excited.

Have I anything more to say to you? No; not for the present—the rest is all flown away; and indulging tenderness for you, I cannot now complain of some people here, who have ruffled my temper for two or three days past.

The next letter, written at the close of the same year, shows that she was evidently growing more and more anxious about being left so much by Imlay.

[*Paris*, 1794]. *December* 30.

Should you receive three or four of the letters at once which I have written lately, do not think of Sir John Brute, for I do not mean to wife you. I only take advantage of every occasion, that one out of three of my epistles may reach your hands, and inform you that I am not of ——'s opinion, who talks till he makes me angry, of the necessity of your staying two or three months longer.

I do not like this life of continual inquietude

and *entre nous*, I am determined to try to earn some money here myself, in order to convince you that, if you choose to run about the world to get a fortune, it is for yourself, for the little girl and I will live without your assistance, unless you are with us. I may be termed proud; be it so, but I will never abandon certain principles of action.

The common run of men have such an ignoble way of thinking, that, if they debauch their hearts, and prostitute their persons, following perhaps a gust of inebriation, they suppose the wife, slave rather, whom they maintain, has no right to complain, and ought to receive the sultan, whenever he deigns to return, with open arms, though his have been polluted by half an hundred promiscuous amours during his absence.

I consider fidelity and constancy as two distinct things; yet the former is necessary to give life to the other, and such a degree of respect do I think due to myself, that, if only probity, which is a good thing in its place, brings you back, never return!—for if a wandering of the heart, or even a caprice of the imagination detains you, there is an end of all my hopes of happiness. I could not forgive it if I would.

I have gotten into a melancholy mood, you perceive. You know my opinion of men in general;

you know that I think them systematic tyrants, and it is the rarest thing in the world to meet with a man with sufficient delicacy of feeling to govern desire.

When I am thus sad I lament that my little darling, fondly as I doat on her, is a girl. I am sorry to have a tie to a world that for me is ever sown with thorns.

You will call this an ill-humoured letter, when in fact it is the strongest proof of affection I can give, to dread to lose you. —— has taken such pains to convince me that you must and ought to stay, that it has inconceivably depressed my spirits. You have always known my opinion. I have ever declared that two people who mean to live together ought not to be separated. If certain things are more necessary to you than me, search for them.

Say but one word, and you shall never hear of me more. If not, for God's sake let us struggle with poverty —with any evil, but these continual inquietudes of business, which I have been told were to last but a few months, though every day the end appears more distant. This is the first letter in this strain that I have determined to forward to you; the rest lie by, because I was unwilling to give you pain, and I should not now write if I did not think that there would be no

conclusion to the schemes, which demand, as I am told, your presence.

As time goes on, her letters are more painful, as the truth gradually dawns on her that Imlay is growing indifferent towards her.

[*Paris*, 1795] *February* 9.

The melancholy presentment has for some time hung on my spirits, that we were parted for ever; and the letters I received this day, by Mr ——, convince me that it was not without foundation. You allude to some other letters, which I supposed have miscarried; for most of those I have got were only a few hasty lines, calculated to wound the tenderness the sight of the superscriptions excited. I mean not however to complain; yet so many feelings are struggling for utterance, and agitating a heart almost bursting with anguish, that I find it very difficult to write with any degree of coherence.

You left me indisposed, though you have taken no notice of it; and the most fatiguing journey I ever had, contributed to continue it. However, I recovered my health; but a neglected cold, and continual inquietude during the last two months, have reduced me to a state of weakness

I never before experienced. Those who did not know that the cankerworm was at work at the core, cautioned me about suckling my child too long. God preserve this poor child, and render her happier than her mother.

But I am wandering from my subject indeed; my head turns giddy, when I think that all the confidence I have had in the affection of others is come to this. I did not expect this blow from you. I have done my duty to you and my child; and if I am not to have any return of affection to reward me, I have the sad consolation of knowing that I deserved a better fate. My soul is weary, I am sick at heart; and, but for this little darling, I would cease to care about a life, which is now stripped of every charm. You see how stupid I am, uttering declamation, when I mean simply to tell you, that I consider your requesting me to come to you, as merely dictated by honour. Indeed I scarcely understand you. You request me to come, and then tell me that you have not given up all thoughts of returning to this place.

When I determined to live with you, I was only governed by affection. I would share poverty with you, but I turn with affright from the sea of trouble on which you are entering. I have certain principles of action; I know what I look for to found my happiness on. It is not

money. With you I wished for sufficient to procure the comforts of life, as it is, less will do. I can still exert myself to obtain the necessaries of life for my child, and she does not want more at present.

I have two or three plans in my head to earn our subsistence; for do not suppose that, neglected by you, I will lie under obligations of a pecuniary kind to you! No; I would sooner submit to menial service. I wanted the support of your affection; that gone, all is over! I did not think when I complained of ——'s contemptible avidity to accumulate money, that he would have dragged you into his schemes.

I cannot write. I inclose a fragment of a letter, written soon after your departure, and another which tenderness made me keep back when it was written. You will see there the sentiments of a calmer, though not a more determined moment. Do not insult me by saying that 'our being together is paramount to every other consideration!' Were it, you would not be running after a bubble, at the expense of my peace of mind.

Perhaps this is the last letter you will ever receive from me.

Knowing the wretched termination of her

connection with Imlay, it is easy to trace, in the correspondence, his growing indifference to her increasing misery. Whatever his neglect, and however many his excuses for not returning to her, she never allowed her devotion towards him to waver. Although sorely tried, she still displayed the most noble and beautiful love for him. Imlay's affairs, too, were seriously embarrassed, and it was evident that money matters were the principal interest in his life.

Hull, June 13, 1795.
Saturday Morning.

Your second leter reached me about an hour ago. You were certainly wrong in supposing that I did not mention you with respect; though, without my being conscious of it, some sparks of resentment may have animated the gloom of despair. Yes; with less affection I should have been more respectful.

However the regard which I have for you is so unequivocal to myself, I imagine that it must be sufficiently obvious to everybody else. Besides, the only letter I intended for the public eye was to ——, and that I destroyed * from delicacy before you saw them, because it was only written

* This passage refers to some letters which were written under a purpose of suicide and not intended to be opened till afterwards.

(of course warmly in your praise) to prevent any odium being thrown on you.

I am harrassed by your embarrassments, and shall certainly use all my efforts to make the business terminate to your satisfaction in which I am engaged.

My friend, my dearest friend—I feel my fate united to yours by the most sacred principles of my soul, the yearnings of—yes, I will say it—a true, unsophisticated heart.—Yours most truly,

MARY.

From the latter part of the letter, it will be seen that she was about to take an active part in Imlay's business. And when it was found necessary that some one should go to Sweden and Norway, to arrange some matter on his behalf, she went herself. The journey, it was considered, would prove advantageous to her health, and accordingly she undertook the voyage in June 1795. But from the next letter, it may be gathered that she was very far from happy:—

Hull, June 16, 1795.
Tuesday Morning.

The captain has just sent to inform me that I must be on board in the course of a few hours. I wished to have stayed till to-morrow. It would

have been a comfort to me to have received another letter from you. Should one arrive, it will be sent after me.

My spirits are agitated, I scarcely know why. The quitting England seems to be a fresh parting. Surely you will not forget me. A thousand weak forebodings assault my soul, and the state of my health renders me sensible to everything.

It is surprising that in London, in a continual conflict of mind, I was still growing better, whilst here, bowed down by the despotic hand of fate, forced into resignation by despair, I seem to be fading away- -perishing beneath a cruel blight, that withers up all my faculties.

The child is perfectly well. My hand seems unwilling to add adieu! I know not why this inexpressible sadness has taken possession of me. It is not a presentiment of ill. Yet, having been so perpetually the sport of disappointment, having a heart that has been, as it were, a mask for misery, I dread to meet wretchedness in some new shape!

Well, let it come, I care not! What have I to dread, who have so little to hope for! God bless you; I am most affectionately and sincerely yours,

MARY.

The following letters written abroad speak for themselves, and show how utterly wretched she was:—

Sweden, July 1, 1795.

I labour in vain to calm my mind. My soul has been overwhelmed by sorrow and disappointment. Everything fatigues me; this is a life that cannot last long. It is you who must determine with respect to futurity; and, when you have, I will act accordingly—I mean, we must either resolve to live together or part for ever; I cannot bear these continual struggles.

But I wish you to examine carefully your own heart and mind; and, if you perceive the least chance of being happier without me than with me, or if your inclination leans capriciously to that side, do not dissemble; but tell me frankly that you will never see me more. I will then adopt the plan I mentioned to you—for we must either live together, or I will be entirely independent.

My heart is so oppressed, I cannot write with precision. You know, however, that what I so imperfectly express, are not the crude sentiments of the moment. You can only contribute to my comfort (it is the consolation I am in need of) by being with me; and, if the tenderest friendship

is of any value, why will you not look to me for a degree of satisfaction that heartless affectation cannot bestow. . . . God bless you.—Yours truly,

MARY.

Sweden, July 4, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND! — I cannot tear my affections from you, and, though every remembrance stings me to the soul, I think of you till I make allowance for the very defects of character that have given such a cruel stab to my peace.

Still, however, I am more alive than you have seen me for a long, long time. I have a degree of vivacity, even in my grief, which is preferable to the benumbing stupor, that, for the last year, has frozen up all my faculties. . . .

With what a cruel sigh have I recollected that I had forgotten to hope! Reason, or rather experience, does not thus cruelly damp poor Fanny's pleasures; she plays all day in the garden with ——'s children; and makes friends for herself.

Do not tell me that you are happier without us. Will you not come to us in Switzerland? Ah! Why do you not love us with more sentiment? Why are you a creature of such sympathy

that the warmth of your feelings, or rather quickness of your senses hardens your heart? It is my misfortune that my imagination is perpetually shading your defects, and lending you charms, whilst the grossness of your senses makes you (call me not vain) overlook graces in me, that only dignity of mind and the sensibility of an expanded heart can give. God bless you! Adieu.

Again, she writes in the same terrible distractions:—poor thing!

Copenhagen, Sept. 6, 1795.

I received just now your letter of the 20th. I had written you a letter last night, into which imperceptibly slipt some of my bitterness of soul. I am not sufficiently vain to imagine that I can, for more than a moment, cloud your enjoyment of life—to prevent even that, you had better never hear from me—and repose on the idea that I am happy.

Gracious God! it is impossible for me to stifle something like resentment, when I receive fresh proofs of your indifference. What I have suffered this last year is not to be forgotten! I have not that happy substitute for wisdom, insensibility—and the lively sympathies which bind me to my

fellow creatures, are all of a painful kind. They are the agonies of a broken heart; pleasure and I have shaken hands.

I see here nothing but heaps of ruin, and only converse with people immersed in trade and sensuality. I am weary of travelling, yet seem to have no home—no resting place to look to. I am strangely cast off. How often, passing through the rocks, I have thought, 'But for this child, I would lay my head on one of them, and never open my eyes again!'

With a heart feelingly alive to all the affections of my nature, I have never met with one softer than the stone that I would fain take for my last pillow. I once thought I had, but it was all a delusion. I meet with families continually, who are bound together by affection or principle, and when I am conscious that I have fulfilled the duties of my station, almost to a forgetfulness of myself, I am ready to demand, in a murmuring tone, of Heaven, 'Why am I thus abandoned?'

. . . I cannot endure this suspense. Decide. Do you fear to strike another blow? We live together, or eternally apart! I shall not write to you again, till I receive an answer to this. I must compose my tortured soul before I write on indifferent subjects. . . .

I do not know whether I write intelligibly,



GODWIN.

for my head is disturbed. But this you ought to pardon, for it is with difficulty frequently that I make out what you mean to say. You write, I suppose, at Mr ——'s after dinner, when your head is not the clearest, and as for your heart, if you have one, I see nothing like the dictates of affection, unless a glimpse when you mention the child. Adieu!

— — —

Her idea of suicide is hinted at in the next letter; one of the most painful in the correspondence:—

[*London, November* 1795].

I write you now on my knees, imploring you to send my child and the maid with ——, to Paris, to be consigned to the care of Madame — —, Rue ——, Section de ——. Should they be removed, —— can give their direction.

Let the maid have all my clothes without distinction.

Pay the cook her wages, and do not mention the confession which I forced from her; a little sooner or later is of no consequence. Nothing but my extreme stupidity could have rendered me blind so long. Yet, whilst you assured me that you had no attachment, I thought we might still have lived together.

I shall make no comments on your conduct, or any appeal to the world. Let my wrongs sleep with me! Soon, very soon, I shall be at peace. When you receive this, my burning head will be cold.

I would encounter a thousand deaths, rather than a night like the last. Your treatment has thrown my mind into a state of chaos, yet I am serene. I go to find comfort, and my only fear is, that my poor body will be insulted by an endeavour to recall my hated existence. But I shall plunge into the Thames where there is the least chance of my being snatched from the death I seek.

God bless you: May you never know by experience what you have made me endure. Should your sensibility ever awake, remorse will find its way to your heart; and, in the midst of business and sensual pleasure, I shall appear before you, the victim of your deviation from rectitude.

The following letter was written after she had attempted suicide.

London, November 1795.
Sunday Morning.

I have only to lament that, when the bitterness of death was past, I was inhumanly brought

back to life and misery. But a fixed determination is not to be baffled by disappointment; nor will I allow that to be a frantic attempt which was one of the calmest acts of reason.

In this respect I am only accountable to myself. Did I care for what is termed reputation, it is by other circumstances that I should be dishonoured.

You say, 'that you know not how to extricate ourselves out of the wretchedness in which we have been plunged.' You are extricated long since. But I forbear to comment If I am condemned to live longer, it is a living death.

It appears to me that you lay much more stress on delicacy than on principle, for I am unable to discover what sentiment of delicacy would have been violated by your visiting a wretched friend, if indeed you have any friendship for me.

But, since your new attachment is the only sacred thing in your eyes, I am silent Be happy! my complaints shall never more damp your enjoyment; perhaps I am mistaken in supposing that even my death could, for more than a moment. This is what you call magnanimity. It is happy for yourself, that you possess this quality in the highest degree.

Your continually asserting that you will do

all in your power to contribute to my comfort when you only allude to pecuniary assistance, appears to me a flagrant breach of delicacy. I want not such vulgar comfort, nor will I accept it.

I never wanted but your heart. That gone, you have nothing more to give. Had I only poverty to fear, I should not shrink from life. Forgive me then, if I say, that I shall consider any direct or indirect attempt to supply my necessities, as an insult which I have not merited, and as rather done out of tenderness for your own reputation, than for me. Do not mistake me; I do not think that you value money, therefore I will not accept what you do not care for, though I do much less, because certain privations are not painful to me.

When I am dead, respect for yourself will make you take care of the child. I write with difficulty—probably I shall never write to you again. Adieu. God bless you.

With the next letter we may conclude this sad story of Mary Wollstonecraft's life.

London, Nov. 27, 1795.

The letter, without an address, which you put up with the letters you returned, did not meet

my eyes till just now. I had thrown the letters aside; I did not wish to look over a register of sorrow.

My not having seen it, will account for my having written to you with anger—under the impression your departure, without even a line left for me, made on me, even after your late conduct, which could not lead me to expect much attention to my sufferings. In fact, 'the decided conduct which appeared to me so unfeeling,' has almost overturned my reason; my mind is injured, I scarcely know where I am or what I do.

The grief I cannot conquer, (for some cruel recollections never quit me, banishing almost every other), I labour to conceal in total solitude. My life, therefore, is but an exercise of fortitude, continually on the stretch, and hope never gleams in this tomb, where I am buried alive.

But I meant to reason with you, and not to complain. You tell me 'that I shall judge more coolly of your mode of acting, sometime hence.' But, is it not possible that *passion* clouds your reason as much as it does mine? And ought you not to doubt whether those principles are those 'exalted,' as you term them, which only lead to your own gratification?—in other words, whether it would be just to have no principle of action, but that of following your inclination, trampling

on the affection you have fostered, and the expectations you have excited?

My affection for you is rooted in my heart. I know you are not what you now seem, nor will you always act or feel as you now do, though I may never be comforted by the change.

Even at Paris, my image will haunt you. You will see my pale face, and sometimes the tears of anguish will drop on your heart, which you have forced from mine. I cannot write. I thought I could quickly have refuted all your *ingenious* arguments; but my head is confused. Right or wrong, I am miserable. . . . I have loved with my whole soul, only to discover that I had no chance of a return, and that existence is a burthen without it. . . .

I have been treated ungenerously—if I understand what is generosity. You seem to me only to have been anxious to shake me off, regardless whether you dashed me to atoms by the fall. In truth I have been rudely handled. *Do you judge coolly*, and I trust you will not continue to call those capricious feelings 'the most refined,' which would undermine not only the most sacred principles, but the affections which unite mankind.

You would render mothers unnatural, and there would be no such thing as a father! If your theory of morals is the most 'exalted,' it is

certainly the most easy. It does not require much magnanimity to determine to please ourselves for the moment, let others suffer what they will!

Excuse me for again tormenting you; my heart thirsts for justice from you; and whilst I recollect that you approved Miss ——'s conduct, I am convinced you will not always justify your own.

Beware of the deception of passion! It will not always banish from your mind that you have acted ignobly, and condescended to subterfuge to gloss over the conduct you could not excuse. Do truth and principle require such sacrifices?

WILLIAM COWPER

1800

THEODORA JANE COWPER to whom the poet formed an early attachment, was his first cousin. She was an accomplished woman, and possessed of attractive looks. Sensible of her cousin's amiable disposition, she regarded him with equal affection. But her father, from an idea that the union of persons so nearly related was improper, refused to sanction the engagement. Although frustrated in their wishes, they did not cease to love, nor occasionally to meet. Meanwhile he wrote to her —under the name of Delia—a series of poems, still indulging the hope of possessing the object of his love. But it proved otherwise, as appears in the poem in which he speaks so feelingly of his separation from her; after which it was their fate never to meet again. It was this disappointment, it is said, that clouded all his future prospects,

and affected him with a depression of spirits from which he more or less suffered to the end of his life. His cousin remained constant to him, neither time nor absence diminishing her attachment. For many years she preserved with tender care these love-poems, but falling into a morbid state of mind, she placed them in a sealed packet, and entrusted them to her particular friend, with directions that they were not to be opened till after her decease. Her death took place 22nd Oct., 1844, and removed the veil of secrecy touching a love romance that was hopelessly destructive of what might have been the lasting happiness of two lives.

Would my Delia know if I love, let her take
My last thought at night, and the first when I wake;
With my prayers and best wishes preferr'd for her sake.

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone
I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,
Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown.

Let her think what odd whimsies I have in my brain,
When I read one page over and over again,
And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fix'd and so steady my look,
Without ever regarding the person who spoke,
Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke.

Or why then with pleasure her praises I hear
(That sweetest of melody sure to my ear),
I attend, and at once inattentive appear.

And lastly, when summon'd to drink to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once mention her name,
Though herself and the woman I love are the same.

Throughout most of these productions, there is a sad tinge of melancholy, which is only what might be expected.

Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!
Thy pleasure is past, and thy sorrows increase;
See the shadows of evening how far they extend,
And a long night is coming that never may end;
For the sun is now set that enliven'd the scene,
And an age must be past e'er it rises again.

Already deprived of its splendour and heat,
I feel thee more slowly, more heavily beat;
Perhaps over strain'd with the quick pulse of pleasure,
Thou art glad of this respite to beat at thy leisure;
But the sigh of distress shall now weary thee more,
Than the flutter and tumult of passion before.

The heart of a lover is never at rest,
With joy overwhelm'd or with sorrow oppress'd;
When Delia is near, all is ecstacy then,
And I even forget I must lose her again.
When absent, as wretched, as happy before,
Despairing I cry, I shall see her no more!

At Berkhamstead.

Written after leaving her at New Burns—

How quick the change from joy to woe,
How chequer'd is our lot below!
Seldom we view the prospect fair,
Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care,
(Some pleasing intervals between),
Scowl over more than half the scene.
Last week with Delia, gentle maid,
Far hence in happier fields I stray'd,
While on her dear enchanting tongue,
Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,
For absence had withheld it long.
Welcome my long-lost love, she said,
E'er since our adverse fates decreed
That we must part, and I must mourn
Till once more blest by thy return,
Love, on whose influence I relied
For all the transports I enjoy'd,
Has play'd the cruel tyrant's part,
And turn'd tormentor to my heart;
But let me hold thee to my breast,
Dear partner of my joy and rest,
And not a pain and not a fear,
Or anxious doubt shall enter there.
Happy thought I, the favour'd youth,
Blest with such undissembled truth!—
Five suns successive rose and set,
And saw no monarch in his state,
Wrapt in the blaze of majesty,
So free from every care as I.—
Next day the scene was overcast;
Such day till then I never pass'd,—
For on that day, relentless fate!
Delia and I must separate.
Yet ere we look'd our last farewell,

'From her dear lips this comfort fell,—
'Fear not that time, where'er we rove,
Or absence, shall abate my love.'
And can I doubt my charming maid,
As unsincere what you have said?
Banish'd from thee to what I hate,
Dull neighbours and insipid chat,
No joy to cheer me, none in view,
But the dear hope of meeting you;
And that through passion's optic seen,
With ages interposed between;—
Blest with the kind support you give,
'Tis to your promised truth I live;
How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,
You best may tell, who feel the same.

The next poem seems to have been written after they had been separated for some time.

Hope, like the short-lived ray that gleams awhile
Through wintry skies, upon the frozen waste,
Cheers o'en the face of misery to a smile;
But soon the momentary pleasure's past.

How oft, my Delia! since our last farewell,
(Years that have roll'd since that distressful hour),
Grieved I have said, when most our hopes prevail,
Our promised happiness is least secure.

Oft I have thought the scene of troubles closed,
And hoped once more to gaze upon your charms;
And oft some dire mischance has interposed,
And snatched th' expected blessing from my arms.

The seaman thus, his shatter'd vessel lost,
Still vainly strives to shun the threat'ning death;
And while he thinks to gain the friendly coast,
And drops his feet, and feels the sands beneath,

Borne by the wave, steep-sloping from the shore,
  Back to th' inclement deep again he beats
The surge aside, and seems to tread secure;
  And now the refluent wave his baffled toil defeats.

Had you, my love, forbade me to pursue
  My fond attempt, disdainfully retired
And with proud scorn compell'd me to subdue
  Th' ill-fated passion by yourself inspired;

Then haply to some distant spot removed,
  Hopeless to gain, unwilling to molest
With fond entreaties whom I dearly loved,
  Despair or absence had redeem'd my rest.

But now sole partner in my Delia's heart,
  Yet doom'd far off in exile to complain,
Eternal absence cannot ease my smart,
  And hope subsists but to prolong my pain.

Oh then! kind Heaven, be this my latest breath;
  Here end my life, or make it worth my care;
Absence from whom we love is worse than death,
  And frustrate hope severer than despair.

To spare Theodora's feelings, Cowper's relations to Mrs Unwin were carefully represented as resembling devotion to a 'venerable parent;' and in Hayley's life of the poet a false colouring is consequently given to the narrative. Of the various sonnets which Cowper addressed to Mrs Unwin we subjoin a specimen:—

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings;
  Such aid from heaven, as some have feign'd they drew!

An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praises of meaning things,
That ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,—
And that immortalises whom it sings.
But thou hast little need: There is a book,
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look;
A chronicle of actions, just and bright;
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

NELSON

1805

It has been observed by one of Nelson's biographers, that the beauty, simplicity, and integrity of Nelson's character, are plainly seen in his letters to the woman he loved so well. The letters of Nelson, are, as easily might be imagined, distinguished by that tenderness which is usually the companion of exalted courage—a brave man is commonly a kind one also. The personality of England's greatest naval hero stands out in them prominently. We see written in them in clear characters, that sympathy which we know from history was Nelson's most remarkable characteristic. He who had so much of a woman in him that he could not bear to behold the discipline, necessarily harsh, which must succeed any dereliction of duty on board a man-of-war, was well fitted by nature to appreciate and admire

the womanly, tender heart, which ever sought to lighten the harm of common cruelty and rapine, which no preacher, we are assured by the poet, may heal.

Of Lady Hamilton, Southey has given us a short but comprehensive description. Her personal attractions, he says, were almost unequalled, and her powers of mind were no less fascinating than the beauty of her person. Of pictures of Lady Hamilton there is no lack, Romney painted her three-and-twenty times, and she sat twice to Hoppner, Lawrence, and Sir Joshua Reynolds.

She was,—on this point at least all accounts of her agree,—an object of general quest and an universal favourite in Naples, where Nelson first saw her. His love for her was, on his part, love at first sight. That seems clear. It is equally clear that this love remained with him till he died. His last words are almost too well known to need repetition. 'Take care of Lady Hamilton. I leave her and my daughter to my country. Kiss me, Hardy,' and that was all. After death her picture was found upon his heart. He speaks of her as his Saint, and as his Guardian Angel. His love for her was sincere, deep, loyal. She was his ideal, his religion, his life.

Nelson's letters are numerous. He seems to



LADY HAMILTON

have availed himself of every occasion of writing. Sometimes he is more cautious, more reserved, than at others, but everywhere he is devoted and true.

Emma Lyons, afterwards Lady Hamilton—the Lady Hamilton of the life of Nelson—was the daughter of a Welsh collier. She was born, we are told, in 1764, and as a girl, frequently accompanied an ass laden with fuel for the peasant fires. Coming to London, she met with Romney the artist, who was at the time living apart from his wife and children. He fell in love with her, and painted her in many pictures, as a Magdalen and a Bacchante indifferently, as St. Cecilia and Calypso. After leaving Romney, she met with other adventures of minor moment, and then came to Naples with Sir William Hamilton. This gentleman, who was then about fifty, amused himself by collecting Greek vases, and finally sold his collection for £7000. He protected, it has been epigrammatically said, the arts, and they, in turn, protected him. Sir William Hamilton and Emma Lyons were ultimately married at Marylebone Church in 1791. The bride signs her name, for what reason it is now perhaps impossible to discover, *Amy Lions*. One of her many admirers at Naples was the celebrated 'Court Bishop'—the English Earl of

Bristol. This gentleman writes to her, 'We look for your coming as the Jews looked for the coming of our Lord.' He also composed verses to her of this kidney:

'Ah, Emma, who'd ever be wise,
If madness be loving of thee?'

In 1793, Captain Nelson arrived in the Bay of Naples. In 1798, Lady Hamilton was an 'honour to her sex' and 'one of the best of women in the world.'

In 1803, Sir William Hamilton died and was buried. With his last breath he commended his 'incomparable Emma' to the care of 'his dear Nelson.'

This testimony of her husband, the man, who from his intimate relations with her was likely to know her best, who was no fool, and very far from being blindly uxorious, should be conclusive evidence to any unprejudiced person of the excellence of Lady Hamilton's character. He called her 'incomparable,' and he declared solemnly, in a most veracious moment, that she had 'never offended him her whole life long,' Of how many of our virtuous British wives would such a description, at such a moment, be truthfully given by their legal lords?

His daughter Horatia, Nelson bequeathed to

his country. His country regarded the legacy much as the famous flower-pot was regarded in the *Chapeau de Paille d'Italie*. It shifted its precious boon on to Lady Hamilton. This unfortunate woman of a naturally luxurious and generous nature had become embarrassed by debts, but she appears to have cared for her child and instructed her to the best of her poor ability. She was, in due course of time, arrested and removed with her little girl to Queen's Bench Prison. Then came the publication of her lover's letters, and if such an action can be excused, such surely were the sort of circumstances to excuse it.

A generous alderman, a lasting honour to that civic body so often and so unjustly the butt of common ridicule and silly contempt, a man of the name of Smith—would that more were known of him!—like the good Christian and true hearted gentleman that he was, procured her release, by his unaided exertions, and got her away in safety to Calais.

There the mistress of Nelson died—it has been whispered of starvation,—in 1815. Her whole property was valued at £9. Her body,—the fair form which Nelson most worshipped on this side divinity, the tender heart, the liberal hand, the mouth of music, the eyes, the glorious eyes which filled with light and courage the soul

of England's greatest naval hero at Trafalgar,—her body was put into a deal box, and she was buried in unconsecrated ground. It may be that there she sleeps as well as though the customary sacerdotal invocation had been read over her senseless ears in the most fashionable of hallowed Aceldàmas, and she had been garmented from head to foot in a cerecloth of tissue of gold.

Nelson's last letter was delivered to Lady Hamilton, by Captain Hardy. It was found after his death on his desk. It is now in the British Museum. Lady Hamilton has written on it, 'O miserable wretched Emma! O glorious and happy Nelson!'

Nelson writes his first letter to Lady Hamilton from the *Vanguard* off Malta, Oct. 24, 1798. This letter commences with 'My Dear Madam' and ends, 'Your obliged and faithful friend, Horatio Nelson.' His next letter begins with 'My Dear Lady Hamilton,' then we have 'My Dear Lady,' then 'My Dearest Friend,' then 'My Truly Dearest Friend,' then a letter from Deal, July 31, 1801,—which begins with 'My Dearest Emma,' and ends, 'Ever, for ever yours only, your Nelson and Bronté.

The letter runs thus:—

My dearest Emma,—Did not you get my

letter from Sheerness on Thursday morning telling you I was just setting off for Deal, as I have no letter from you of yesterday only those of Wednesday, which went to Sheerness? It has been my damned blunder, and not yours; for which I am deservedly punished by missing one of your dear letters. They are my comfort, joy and delight.

My time is truly, fully taken up, and my head aches before night comes.

I got to bed, last night, at half-past nine, but the hour was so unusual that I heard the clock strike one. To say that I thought of you, would be nonsense: for you are never out of my thoughts.

At this moment I see no prospect of my getting to London: but very soon the business of my command will become so simple that a child may direct it.

What rascals your post-chaise people must be. . . .*

You need not fear all the women in the world, for all others except yourself are pests to me. I have but one; for who can be like my Emma! I am confident you would do nothing which can hurt my feelings; and I will die by

* He says they have been already paid, and advises Lady Hamilton not to pay more.

torture sooner than do anything which could offend you.

Give ten thousand kisses to my dear Horatia.

The rest of this letter is concerned with the cow-pox, and the extension of the patent of peerage.

From Deal, August 18, 1801, he writes:—

My dearest Emma,—Your dear, good, kind, and most affectionate letters are arrived, and I feel all you say; and may Heaven bless me very soon with a sight of your dear angelic face. You are a nonpareil! No, not one fit to wipe your shoes. I am, ever have been, and always will remain your most firm, fixed and unalterable friend.

In another letter from the Medusa Downs, August 31, 1801, beginning 'My dear Emma! dearest, best friend of Nelson,' he tells her the weather is bad, and he is very sea-sick; and, again, in a post-script, that he is 'so dreadfully sea-sick that he cannot hold up his head.'

August 26, 1803.

MY DEAREST EMMA,-

All your letters, *my dear letters*, are so entertaining, and which point so clearly what you are after that they give me either the greatest pleasure or pain. It is the next best thing to being with you.

I only desire, my dearest Emma, that you will always believe that Nelson's your own: Nelson's *Alpha* and *Omega* is *Emma*! I cannot alter—my affection and love is beyond even this world! Nothing can shake it but yourself; and that I will not allow myself to think for a moment is possible.

I feel that you are the real friend of my bosom, and dearer to me than life; and that I am the same to you. But I will neither have P's nor Q's come near you. No! not the slice of Single Gloster! But, if I was to go on, it would argue that want of confidence which would be injurious to your honour.

I rejoice that you have had so pleasant a trip into Norfolk, and I hope one day to carry you there by a nearer *tie* in law, but not in love and affection than at present.

* Says he has received all her letters.

He concludes this letter with saying he will send her some sherry and a cask of paxoretti (*sic*) by the convoy.

'*Victory*,' *April* 2, 1804.

I have, my dearest beloved Emma, been so uneasy for this last month, desiring most ardently to hear of your well-doing!

Captain Capel brought me your letters sent by the *Thisbe* from Gibraltar. I opened—opened—found none but December, and early in January. I was in such an agitation! At last I found one without a date, which, thank God! told my poor heart that you were recovering, but that dear little Emma was no more, and that Horatia had been so very ill—it all together upset me.

But, it was just at bed-time, and I had time to reflect, and be thankful to God for sparing you and our dear Horatia. I am sure the loss of one, much more both—would have drove me mad. I was so agitated as it was that I was glad it was night and that I could be by myself.

Kiss dear Horatia for me, and tell her to be a dutiful and good child; and if she is that we shall always love her.

Never mind the great Bashaw at the Priory.



NELSON.

He be damned! If he was single and had a mind to marry you he could only make you a Marchioness, but as he is situated and I situated, I can make you a Duchess; and if it pleases God that time may arrive. Amen! Amen!

As for your friend Lady H—— she is, in her way, as great a pimp as any of them!

What a set! But if they manage their own intrigues is not that enough? I am sure neither you nor I care what they do: much less envy them their *chere amies.*

'*Victory*,' *May* 5, 1804.

I find, my dearest Emma, that your picture is very much admired by the French Consul at Barcelona and that he has not sent it to be admired—which I am sure it would be—by Buonaparte. . . .*

I do not say all I wish, and which my dearest *beloved* Emma—(read that whoever opens this letter; and for what I care publish it to the world)—your fertile imagination can readily fancy I would say; but this I can say with great truth that I am

FOR EVER YOURS.

* General news of no particular interest.

'Victory,' September 29, 1804.

This day, my dearest Emma, which gave me birth, I consider as more fortunate than common days: as by my coming into this world, it has brought me so intimately acquainted with you, who my soul holds most dear. I well know that you will keep it and have my dear Horatia to drink my health. Forty-six years of toil and trouble! How few more the common lot of mankind leads us to expect, and therefore it is almost time to think of spending the few last years in peace and quietness.

'Victory' off Plymouth Sept. 17 (1805) *Nine o'clock in the Morning—Blowing fresh at W.S.W. dead foul wind.*

I sent, my own dearest Emma, a letter for you last night in a Torbay boat and gave the man a guinea to put it in the Post Office. . .*

I entreat my dear Emma that you will cheer up—and we will look forward to many many happy years and be surrounded by our children's children. God Almighty can when he pleases, remove the impediment.

My heart and soul is with you and Horatia. For ever ever I am yours most devotedly

NELSON AND BRONTÉ.

* General news of no particular interest.

The two letters which follow are from Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson:—

Naples, June 30, 1798.

DEAR SIR,—I take the opportunity of Captain Hope to write a few lines to you, and thank you for your kind letter by Captain Bowen.

The Queen was much pleased, as I translated it for her, and charges me to thank you; and say she prays for your honour and safety—victory she is sure you will have. . . .

I write to you, my dear sir, in confidence and in a hurry.

I hope you will not quit the Mediterranean without taking *us*. We have our leave, and everything ready at a day's notice, to go; but yet I trust in God and you, that we shall destroy these monsters before we go from hence. Surely their reign cannot last long!

If you have any opportunity, write to us, pray, do; you do not know how your letters comfort us.

God bless you, my dear, dear sir! and believe me ever your most sincerely obliged and attached friend.

EMMA HAMILTON.

Thursday Evening, June 12, 1799.

I have been with the Queen this evening.

She is very miserable, and says that although the people of Naples are for them, in general, YET things will not be brought to that state of quietness and subordination, till the fleet of Lord Nelson appears *off Naples*. She therefore begs, intreats and conjures you, my dear Lord, if it is possible to arrange matters so as to be able to go to Naples.

Sir William is *writing* (? waiting) for General Acton's *answer*.

For God's sake consider it and do! We will go with you, if you will come and fetch us.

Sir William is ill. I am ill. It will do us good.

God bless you! Ever, ever yours sincerely.

E. HAMILTON.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

1816

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, dramatist, scholar, poet and orator, after leaving Harrow, fell in love with Miss Maria Linley, then sixteen years of age, the fair Maid of Bath, the far-famed leader of the singing men and singing women of her time, ran away with her and married her in France. On his return he fought two duels with a captain Matthews, who, Miss Linley tells us in a letter published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1825, resolved to 'make her his prey' at the age of twelve. This gentleman, after vainly trying to become the lady's favourite, became her foe and calumniator. The history of these duels, and of Sheridan's disguises to approach his beloved are fairly well known from 'Moore's Memoirs.'

Macaulay has deigned to celebrate Miss Linley's beauty. He calls her the beautiful mother of a beautiful race. Anthony Pasquin, a con-

temporary of Sheridan's, thus describes his wife: —There is an interesting pensiveness, an indescribable languor in her eyes which seem to look with majestic sorrow upon the frivolities of an elbowing multitude—her vision seems clouded by the pressure of an overcharged understanding—they are like two gems dimmed by the breath of melancholy!

Mrs Sheridan sat to Sir Joshua Reynolds as a model for the Virgin Mary, when he undertook the design of the Holy Family: and, says Pasquin, 'I will undertake to affirm from the day of Apelles to the existing moment, there never was a face more suitable to the grand idea, or more eminently fraught with the lineaments of sober loveliness. She was the Saint Cecilia whose delicate features lighted up by love and music art has rescued from the common decay. Nature seems to have copied her visage from the best Grecian model. She formed an aggregate of more beautiful proportions than I ever contemplated,—were the lady not married, I should have said adored,—before.' It was a pretty compliment she received from Lady Lucan after Mr Sheridan's elaborate Philippic against Warren Hastings, by which he probably lost the friendship of Burke. 'You should consider yourself a very happy woman, Mrs Sheridan, to please that man who can please

everybody.' Moore says of her, 'There has seldom, perhaps existed a finer combination of all those qualities that attract both eye and heart than this accomplished and lovely person exhibited. To judge by what we hear, it was impossible to see her without adoration, or know her without love.' It was observed by a certain gallant Bishop of her day that she seemed to him the connecting link between woman and angel.

Sheridan appears to have preferred poetry to prose in his addresses to his love. If he wrote prose letters, the lady was sensible enough to destroy them. The following poetical epistle was left for her in a Grotto near Bath. It was occasioned by his fear of her displeasure at some advice he had offered her on the preceding day:—

Uncouth is this moss-covered grotto of stone,
And damp is the shade of this dew-dripping tree;
Yet I this rude grotto with rapture will own,
And, willow, thy damps are refreshing to me.

For this is the grotto where Delia reclined,
As late I in secret her confidence sought;
And this is the tree kept her safe from the wind,
As blushing she heard the grave lesson I taught.

Then tell me thou Grotto of moss-covered stone,
And tell me thou Willow with leaves dripping dew,
Did Delia seem vex'd when Horatio was gone?
And did she confess her resentment to you?

Oh! why do you shake your green leaves to the gale,
  Green Willow! and seem thus to sigh to my woe?
And was she indeed then displeased at my tale;
  And did she, green Willow, tell you it was so?

Methinks, now each bough as you're waving, it tries
  To whisper a cause for the sorrow I feel;
To hint how she frowned when I dar'd to advise,
  And sigh'd when she saw that I did it with zeal.

True, true, silly leaves; so she did I allow;
  She frowned—but no rage in her looks could I see,
She frowned—but reflection had clouded her brow,
  She sighed—but perhaps 'twas in pity to me.

Then wave thy leaves brisker, thou Willow of woe!
  I tell thee, no rage in her looks could I see;
I cannot—I will not—believe it was so;
  She was not—she could not be angry with me.

For well did she know that my *heart* meant no wrong;
  It sunk at the thought of but giving her pain;
But trusted its task to a flattering tongue,
  Which err'd from the *feelings* it could not *explain*.

Yet oh! if indeed I've offended the maid,
  If Delia my humble monition refuse,
Sweet Willow! the next time she visits thy shade,
  Fan gently her bosom and plead my excuse.

And thou stony Grot, in thy arch may'st preserve
  Two lingering drops of the night-fallen dew:
And let them fall just at her feet, and they'll serve
  As tears of my sorrow intrusted to you.

Or, lest they unheeded should fall at her feet,
  Let them fall on her bosom of snow, and I'll swear
The next time I visit thy moss-covered seat,
  I'll pay thee each drop with a *genuine tear*.



MISS LINLEY.

So may'st thou, green Willow, for ages thus toss
  Thy branches so lank o'er the slow-winding stream;
And thou, stony Grotto, retain all thy moss,
  While yet there's a poet to make thee his theme.

Nay, more; may my Delia still give you her charms,
  Each evening, and sometimes the whole ev'ning long;
Then Grotto be proud to support her white arms;
  Then Willow wave all thy green tops to her song.

* Dry be that tear, my gentlest love
  Be hush'd that struggling sigh,
Nor seasons, day, nor fate shall prove
  More fix'd, more true than I,
Hushed be that sigh—be dry that tear—
Cease boding doubt, cease anxious fear—
  Dry be that tear!

Ask'st thou how long my love shall stay
  When all that's new is past?
How long? ah! Delia, can I say
  How long my life will last?
Dry be that tear—be hush'd that sigh
At least I'll love thee till I die—
  Hush'd be that sigh.

And does that thought afflict thee too,
  The thought of Damon's death;
That he who only lives for you
  Must yield his faithful breath!
Hush'd be that sigh—be dry that tear,
Nor let us lose our Heaven here—
  Dry be that tear.

* This song, says Moore, was probably produced for Miss Linley at the time of her courtship.

DELIA * TO DAMON.†

Think'st thou, my Damon, I'd forego
This tender luxury of woe;
Which better than the tongue imparts
The feelings of impassioned hearts.
Blest if my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

Can true affection cease to fear?
Poor is the joy, not worth a tear.
Did passion ever know content?
How weak the passion words can paint,
Then let my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

The Cyprian bird with plaintive moan,
Thus makes her faithful passion known,
So Zephyrus breathes on Flora's bowers,
And charms with sighs the Queen of flowers;
Then let my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

TO HYMEN ‡

Teach me kind Hymen! teach—for thou
Must be my only tutor now—
Teach me some innocent employ
That shall the hateful thought destroy,
That I this whole long night must pass
In exile from my love's embrace.
Alas thou hast no wings, O time!

* Mrs Sheridan, who wrote the reply.

† Sheridan.

‡ These lines were written during a very short absence of Sheridan from his cottage at East Burnham. There is, however, no certainty, save a moral one, that they were sent to his wife.

It was some thoughtless lover's rhyme
Who, writing in his Chloe's view,
Paid her the compliment through you ;
For had he if he truly loved,
But once the pangs of absence proved,
He'd cropt thy wings, and in their stead
Have painted thee with heels of lead.
But 'tis the temper of the mind
Where we thy regulator find :
Still o'er the gay and o'er the young
With unfelt steps you flit along :
As Virgil's nymph o'er ripened corn
With such ethereal haste was borne,
That every stock with upright head
Denied the pressure of her tread ;
But o'er the wretched oh ! how slow
And heavy sweeps thy scythe of woe !
Oppressed beneath each stroke they bow,
Thy course engraven on their brow.
A day of absence shall consume
The glow of youth, and manhood's bloom :
And one short night of anxious fear
Shall leave the wrinkles of a year . .

For me who when I'm happy, owe
No thanks to fortune that I'm so ;- -
Who long have learned to look at one
Dear object, and at one alone,
For all the joy and all the sorrow
That gilds the day, or threats the morrow ;—
I never felt thy footsteps light
But when sweet love did aid thy flight ;
And banish'd from his blest dominion
I cared not for thy borrowed pinion.

True she is mine and since she's mine,
At trifles I should not repine ;

But oh! the miser's real pleasure
Is not in knowing he has treasure:
He must behold his golden store
And feel and count his riches o'er.
Thus I, of one dear gem possess'd
And in that treasure only bless'd,
There every day would seek delight,
And clasp the casket every night.

Mrs Sheridan on one occasion went to pass a few weeks with her father and mother at Bath, while her husband remained in town to superintend the concerns of the theatre. During this interval, he addressed to her the following verses, 'which,' says Moore in his life of Sheridan, 'I quote, less from their own peculiar merit, than as a proof how little his heart had yet lost of those first feelings of love and gallantry which too often expire in matrimony, as Faith and Hope do in Heaven, and from the same causes.

'One lost in certainty and one in joy.'

To Laura.

Near Avon's ridgy bank there grows
A willow of no vulgar size,
That tree first heard poor Silvio's woes,
And heard how bright were Laura's eyes.

Its boughs were shade from heat or show'r,
Its roots a moss-grown seat became;
Its leaves would strew the maiden's bower
Its bark was shatter'd with her name!

Once on a blossom-crowned day
Of mirth-inspiring May,
Silvio, beneath this willow's sober shade
In sullen contemplation laid,

Did mock the meadow's flow'ry pride,—
  Rail'd at the dance and sportive ring;—
The tabors call he did deride,
  And said *It was not Spring.*

He scorned the sky of azure blue,
  He scorned whate'er could mirth bespeak,
He chid the beam that drank the dew
  And chid the gale that fann'd his glowing cheek.
Unpaid the season's wonted lay,
For still he sighed and said, it *was not May.*

Ah! why should the glittering stream
  Reflect thus delusive the scene?
Ah! why does a rosy ting'd beam
  Thus vainly enamel the green?
To me nor joy nor light they bring,
I tell thee Phœbus, *'tis not Spring.*

Sweet tut'ress of music and love,
  Sweet bird, if 'tis thee that I hear,
Why left you so early the grove
  To lavish your melody here?
Cease then mistaken thus to sing
Sweet nightingale! *it is not Spring.*

The gale courts my locks but to tease,
  And, Zephyr, I called not on thee;
Thy fragrance no longer can please,
  Then rob not the blossoms for me,
But hence unload thy balmy wing,
Believe me, Zephyr, *'tis not Spring.*

May pois'd her roseate wings, for she had heard
The murmur as she passed the vales along;
And silencing her own indignant bird,
She thus reprov'd poor Silvio's song.

How false is the sight of a lover;
How ready his spleen to discover
What reason would never allow;
Why—Silvio, my sunshine and show'rs,
My blossoms, my birds, and my flow'rs
Were never more perfect than now.

The water's reflection is true,
The green is enamelled to view—
And Philomel sings on the spray;
The gale is the breathing of Spring
'Tis fragrance it bears on its wing,
And the bee is assured it is *May*.

Pardon (said Silvio with a gushing tear),
'Tis Spring, sweet Nymph, *but Laura is not here.*

In sending these verses to his wife, he accompanied them with a description of a party where he had seen some of the finest women of fashion. His praises of their beauty and his story of their flattering attentions made his wife jealous, at least poetically. She sent him some lines in reply which, in Moore's words, are of that kind which we read more with interest than admiration.

They consist of some three dozen stanzas, of which Moore himself seems to have been frightened, he confesses he has omitted five or six

stanzas, as the poem altogether would be too long. She commences thus—

> Soft flowed the lay by Avon's sedgy side,
> While o'er its streams the drooping willow hung,
> Beneath whose shadow Silvio fondly loved
> To check the opening roses as they sprung.
>
> In vain he bade them cease to court the gale,
> That wanton'd balmy on the Zephyr's wing;
> In vain when Philomel renewed her tale,
> He chid her song and said '*It was not Spring.*'

But the roses still bloomed and the nightingale went on singing, and love and nature told them in despite of Silvio's assertion that *it was not*, that *it was Spring.*

Silvio is next represented at his party among the finest women of fashion, holding in his hand a garland of flowers to bestow upon the fairest there. Young and beautiful girls listen to his lively wit. *(1) Stella, (2) Myra, (3) Amoret, (4) Flavia and (5) Jessie, successively apply for the garland, and are successively rejected, everyone for the lady following her till, when he arrives at Jessie, he thinks it better to divide his garland of flowers between the rival candidates. What then remains for Laura? The ever-green, the never fading myrtle, and then—but the reader shall hear Laura herself.

* (1) Duchess of Rutland. (2) Duchess of Devonshire. (3) Lady Crewe. (4) Lady Craven. (5) Countess of Jersey. So, in the key given to Moore.

Forgive, dear youth, the happy Laura said,
Forgive each doubt, each fondly anxious fear,
Which from my heart for ever now is fled—
Thy love and truth thus tried are doubly dear.

With pain I mark'd the various passions rise
When beauty so divine before thee mov'd;
With trembling doubt beheld thy wandering eyes,
For still I feared—alas! because I lov'd.

Each anxious doubt shall Laura *now* forego,
No more regret those joys so lately known,
Conscious, that tho' thy breast to *all* may glow,
Thy faithful *heart* shall beat for *her* alone.

Then Silvio seize again thy tuneful lyre,
Nor yet sweet Beauty's power forbear to praise;
Again let charms divine thy strains inspire,
And Laura's voice shall aid the poet's lays.



MARY WOLLSTONECRAF



SHERIDAN.

WARREN HASTINGS

1818

In the spring of 1769, says Macaulay, Warren Hastings embarked on board of the *Duke of Grafton*, and commenced a voyage distinguished by incidents which might furnish matters for a novel.

Among the passengers in that good ship, the *Duke of Grafton*, was a German of the name of Imhoff. He called himself a baron; but he was in distressed circumstances, and was going out to Madras as a portrait painter, in the hope of picking up some of the pagodas which were then lightly got, and as lightly spent by the English in India. The baron was accompanied by his wife, a native of Archangel. This young woman —as Macaulay calls her, though she appears to have been forty years old with children grown up—who, born under the Arctic circle, was

destined to play the part of a queen under the tropic of Cancer, had an agreeable person, a cultivated mind, and manners in the highest degree engaging. Gleig says she and her husband were little suited to each other; Macaulay says she despised him heartily. She was interested by the conversation and flattered by the attentions of Hastings. The situation was indeed perilous. No place is so propitious to the formation either of close friendship or of deadly enmities, as an Indiaman. The great devices for killing time are quarrelling and flirting.

Under such circumstances, says the eloquent historian, met Warren Hastings and the Baroness Imhoff, two persons whose accomplishments would have attracted notice in any Court of Europe. The gentleman had no domestic ties. An attachment sprung up. Hastings fell ill. The baroness nursed him with womanly tenderness, gave him his medicines with her own fair hand, and even sat up in his cabin while he slept. Long before the *Duke of Grafton* reached Madras, Hastings was in love. But his love was of a most characteristic description. Like his hatred, like his ambition, like all his passions it was strong, but not impetuous. It was calm deep, earnest, patient of delay, unconquerable by time. Imhoff was called into council by his wife

think would like to be married to a Poem and to be given away by a Novel. I have seen your Comet, and only wish it was a sign that poor Rice would get well whose illness makes him rather a melancholy companion. And the more so as so to conquer his feelings and hide them from me, with a forc'd Pun. I kissed your writing over in the hope you had indulged me by leaving a trace of honey. What was your dream? Tell it me and I will tell you the interpretation thereof.—Ever yours, my love!

JOHN KEATS.

Letters of this kind were written at frequent intervals when he was away from her—letters in which his passion for her is blended with his ardent admiration of her beauty. But, when we reflect how soon the poet's dream of happiness has to close through death, there is a sad tinge of melancholy throughout the correspondence. It is expressive of hopes which were never to be realised. Another letter, written later on, is full of tenderest endearment, and was written in the following year:—

SWEETEST FANNY.—You fear sometimes I do not love you so much as you wish? My dear Girl, I love you ever and ever and without

reserve. The more I have known, the more have I lov'd. In every way,—even my jealousies have been agonies of Love; in the hottest fit I ever had I would have died for you. I have vexed you too much. But for Love! Can I help it? You are always new. The last of your kisses was ever the sweetest, the last smile the brightest; the last movement the gracefullest. When you pass'd my window home yesterday, I was fill'd with as much admiration as if I had seen you for the first time. You uttered a half complaint once that I only lov'd your beauty. Have I nothing else then to love in you but that? Do I not see a heart naturally furnish'd with wings imprison itself with me? No ill prospect has been able to turn your thoughts a moment from me. This perhaps should be as much a subject of sorrow as joy—but I will not talk of that. Even if you did not love me I could not help an entire devotion to you: how much more deeply then must I feel for you knowing you love me. My Mind has been the most discontented and restless one that ever was put into a body too small for it. I never felt my Mind repose upon anything with complete and undistracted enjoyment—upon no person but you. When you are in the room my thoughts never fly out of window; you always concentrate



KEATS.

and his wife's lover. It was arranged that the baroness should institute a suit for divorce in the courts of Franconia, that the Baron should afford every facility for the proceeding, and that until the sentence was pronounced they should continue to live together. Hastings was to give certain monies to the baron, and marry the divorced wife, and adopt her children. Eight years after, the baroness became Mrs Hastings. She, too, like the baron, accepted monies with great alacrity, and formed without the connivance of her husband, a private hoard amounting to several lacs of rupees. Her health in due season gave way. The Governor-General against his will was compelled to send her to England. He seems to have loved her with that love which is peculiar to men of strong minds, to men whose affection is not easily won or widely diffused. He fitted up the round-house of an Indiaman for her accommodation with a profusion of sandal wood and carved ivory, and expended thousands of rupees to secure her an agreeable female companion during the voyage.

Macaulay, in his description of Mrs Hastings, has adhered closely to the lively portraiture of Hastings' biographer, Gleig, and his opinion with regard to the degree and quality of the intimacy and affection subsisting between her and her

former husband is almost unanimous with that of Captain Trotter, who has also directed his intellectual energies and contributed his quota to the private history of the most distinguished Governor-General of India.

Gleig describes the baroness as a woman of 'singularly attractive manners, of a very engaging figure and a mind highly cultivated,' and Captain Trotter says of the affection subsisting between the married couple, the love that should 'hallow wedlock seems to have burned but feebly, if it ever burned at all.' According to the latter, the fine threads of sexual sympathy described by Goethe in his Wahlverwandschaften drew the baroness and Warren Hastings together.

His letters to his wife are exceedingly characteristic. They are tender and full of indications of esteem and confidence, but at the same time, a little more ceremonious than is usual in so intimate a relation. The solemn courtesy with which he compliments his 'elegant Marian' reminded Macaulay of the dignified air with which Sir Charles Grandison bowed over Miss Byron's hand in the cedar parlour.

His letters to her commence, 'My dearest Marian.' Writing from Benares on 24th Sept. 1784, he tells her how he feels for her vexations

more than for his own, and then after diverging into matters of business, says, 'What a letter have I written; and who that read it without the direction would suspect it to be written by a fond husband to his beloved wife? Perhaps my other letters, if intercepted, would appear to bear too much of the real character of the writer, and atone more than they ought for the contrary deficiency of this. Excepting my separation from you, I have no great cause to murmur.'

On the 1st of October he writes, 'Last night at about nine o'clock Major Sands brought me the news of Phipps'* arrival at Calcutta, and may God bless them both for it! A short but blessed letter from you, dated the 15th of May. It tells me only that you were safe and well, but it tells enough, and it is written in the language of cheerfulness and affection.' And then he goes on, 'I must repress myself, for if I write all that the fulness of my heart is ready to dictate, I shall never come to an end. Adieu, my beloved, my most deserving and lovely Marian! May the God whose goodness I have wonderfully experienced bless you with health, safety, and comfort, and me with the repossession of my sweet Marian! Amen! Amen! Amen! I never loved you so much as I do at this instant.'

* In an American reprint of these letters this gentleman's name appears as Pipps.

'8th of October. Phipps delivered me your letter. I am the happiest man living; but it is not in a P.S. that I can answer it, or say—no, nor can a folio volume describe—what my feelings have been, and are, from the perusal of it. Let me only assure you that I will comply most sacredly with your injunctions. I leave you to recollect them—and you cannot have forgotten. May the God of goodness guard and bless you,' &c. &c. 'Adieu, my most beloved. Adieu!'

Calcutta, December 26, 1784.

My beloved Marian,—I have received your letter of the 3rd of August. I received it on my return from the play. I could not go to bed, but sat reading it till past two, and afterwards lay long after counting three, without being able to close my eyes. Whether I was happy or unhappy in reading it I cannot tell you. I fear my disappointment on one subject equalled my joy for your safety, the close of your perils, and the promise that you would soon be as well as you ever had been at any period of your life. I have since thought only on the good, and I thank God for it. The attentions shown to you on your arrival, though what I expected, made no small part of my rejoicing. Something might at the first

have been yielded to you on my account; more surely to your character which had preceded you; and your character is marked with virtues all original, and such as would naturally excite curiosity and respect; but I am certain that they who were your first visitors would have wished to repeat their visits early and stimulate others with the same desire to see you.

I read much in your letter to admire, to be delighted with . . . They have given me my freedom and opened the road to my happiness. Yet my Marian forgive me—I do not feel the joy which I ought. I am too much attached to my public character and its relations, and dread the ruin which I see impending over them. . . . May Heaven prosper my design, bless my Marian, and speedily reunite us with every necessary means of happiness within our possession! If I have enough for a decent subsistence I want no pensions and despise titles. At this instant I have but one wish and a *little one* annexed to it, and O God grant them! Amen.

He writes again from Calcutta, 10th January 1785, concluding thus 'It is probable that I shall be with you before you receive this letter. Why therefore should I lengthen it?

I have not been well since my return to

Calcutta, but I do not charge my complaints entirely to my constitution, nor entirely to the climate, nor to both: for my mind has been kept in continual fatigue, and will have little repose till I am out of pilot's water.

May God preserve you in health and promote and prosper our meeting.

Till then adieu, my beloved! Look at the date of this. How different are my present prospects from those which I had at this time last year.

This day I shall keep sacred. I shall give much of it to business, but no part of it to society.

His last letter is conceived thus,

Calcutta, 31 *January* 1785

My dearest Marian,—To-morrow morning I take my leave of Calcutta. The captain is gone and will be ready to weigh as soon as he sees my flag. The *Hussar*, a Danish ship, is also on the point of sailing. As she has the reputation of greater speed than even the *Barrington*, and Captain Johnstone himself (our captain) thinks that she may get home before us, I therefore write this in prevention of such an event, lest

you should be alarmed by it, to inform you of the probability that it may happen, that I am on the way, and that I am well, in defiance of all my cares, anxieties and troubles. More I need not say, as I cannot easily support the thought of its being of use to say even so much as I have said.

May God prosper me in my voyage, and preserve you, my sweet Marian, in health and safety.

JOHN KEATS

1821

The career of this poet was one of those truly sad and chequered lives, which carries with it a pathos better understood than described. Compelled by ill-health to abandon his idea of following medicine as a profession, he devoted his time to literature; and, in the year 1817, published his 'Endymion.' But the severe criticisms which it evoked in the *Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Magazine*, produced an injurious effect on his sensitive nature, suffering, as he was at the time, from the effects of a severe cold, which he caught in the Isle of Man, while on a tour with his friend Charles Armitage Brown. It was in the autumn of this year,—when his constitution was thoroughly depressed,—that he fell in with Fanny Brawne, and was very soon desperately in love with her. This lady, who



FANNY BRAWNE.

was born on the 9th August, in the year 1800, resided at Hampstead, her father having died while she was still a child. From our scanty knowledge, it is difficult to infer what Fanny Brawne was really like, although his description of her is certainly not very flattering. To quote his own words:—'Shall I give you Miss [Brawne]? She is about my height, with a fine style of countenance of the lengthened sort; she wants sentiment in every feature: she manages to make her hair look well; her nostrils are very fine, though a little painful; her mouth is bad and good; her profile is better than her full face, which, indeed, is not full, but pale and thin, without showing any bone; her shape is very graceful, and so are her movements; her arms are good, her hands bad-ish, her feet tolerable. She is not seventeen, but she is ignorant; monstrous in her behaviour, flying out in all directions, calling people such names that I was forced lately to make use of the term,—Minx. This is, I think, from no innate vice, but from a penchant she has for acting stylishly. I am, however, tired of such style, and shall decline any more of it. She had a friend to visit her lately; you have known plenty such—she plays the music, but without one sensation but the feel of the ivory at her fingers; she is a downright

miss, without one set off. We hated her, and smoked her, and baited her, and, I think, drove her away. Miss —— thinks her a paragon of perfection, and says she is the only woman in the world she would change persons with. What a stupe,—she is as superior as a rose to a dandelion.'

Such was the lady who exerted such a marvellous fascination over Keats, and who henceforth was to be his ideal, and haunt his fancy for the remainder of his days. But there can be little doubt that she was possessed of no very deep feelings; for, as it has been remarked,* what can be said of a woman, who, ten years after Keats's death, could write of him to a friend that 'the kindest act would be to let him rest for ever in the obscurity to which circumstances have condemned him.' Anyhow, he loved her with the greatest and most devoted tenderness, and it was probably about April 1819 that he became engaged to her. In July he visited the Isle of Wight with a fellow invalid, James Rice, from which period his correspondence with Fanny Brawne commenced.

The following letter dated July 8th, 1819, is

* 'Life, Letters, and Literary Remains,' R. M. Milnes, 1848, ii, 252-3.

full of thoughtful regard and tender love, and shows how complete his passion was for her :—

My sweet Girl,—Your letter gave me more delight than anything in the world but yourself could do ; indeed, I am almost astonished that any absent one should have that luxurious power over my senses which I feel. Even when I am not thinking of you, I perceive your tenderness and a tenderer nature stealing upon me. All my thoughts, my unhappiest days and nights, have I find not at all cured me of my love of Beauty, but made it so intense that I am miserable that you are not with me : or rather breathe in that dull sort of patience that cannot be called Life. I never knew before, what such a love as you have made me feel, was ; I did not believe in it ; my Fancy was afraid of it, lest it should burn me up. But if you will fully love me, though there may be some fire, 'twill not be more than we can bear when moistened and bedewed with Pleasures. You mention 'horrid people,' and ask me whether it depend upon them whether I see you again. Do understand me, my love, in this. I have so much of you in my heart that I must turn Mentor when I see a chance of harm befalling you. I would never see anything but Pleasure in your eyes, love on your lips, and Happiness in

your steps. I would wish to see you among those amusements suitable to your inclinations and spirits; so that our loves might be a delight in the midst of Pleasures agreeable enough, rather than a resource from vexations and cares. But I doubt much, in case of the worst, whether I shall be philosopher enough to follow my own Lessons; if I saw my resolution give you a pain I could not. Why may I not speak of your Beauty, since without that I never could have lov'd you? I cannot conceive any beginning of such love as I have for you but Beauty. There may be a sort of love for which, without the least sneer at it, I have the highest respect and can admire it in others; but it has not the richness, the bloom, the full form, the enchantment of love after my own heart. So let me speak of your Beauty, though to my own endangering; if you could be so cruel to me as to try elsewhere its Power. You say I am afraid I shall think you do not love me—in saying this you make me ache the more to be near you. I am at the diligent use of my faculties here, I do not pass a day without sprawling some blank verse or tagging some rhymes; and here I must confess that (since I am on that subject) I love you the more in that I believe you have liked me for my own sake and for nothing else. I have met with women whom I really

my whole senses. The anxiety shown about our Love in your last note is an immense pleasure to me; however, you must not suffer such speculations to molest you any more; nor will I any more believe you can have the least pique against me. Brown is gone out—but here is Mrs Wylie —when she is gone I shall be awake for you. Remembrances to your mother.—Your affectionate

J. KEATS.

The constant allusions which he makes to his health show that it was a deep anxiety both to himself and Fanny Brawne, although he evidently as far as possible tried to look on the bright side, as in the following :—

"MY DEAREST FANNY,—Whenever you know me to be alone, come, no matter what day. Why will you go out this morning? I shall not fatigue myself with writing too much I promise you. Brown says I am getting stouter. I rest well and from last night do not remember anything horrid in my dream, which is a capital symptom, for any organic derangement always occasions a Phantasmagoria. It will be a nice idle amusement to hunt after a motto for my Book which I will have, if lucky enough to hit upon a fit one—

not intending to write a preface. I feel I am too late with my note—you are gone out—you will be as cold as a topsail in a north latitude—I advise you to furl yourself and come in a doors. Goodbye love,

J. K.

In the autumn of this year it was decided that he should go to Italy, as his health had made no improvement, and from the symptoms he had already experienced there was no doubt as to his lungs being affected. Accordingly his faithful friend Severn arranged to go with him, and he remained with him till he died. But this parting —and such a parting considering the state of his health—was painfully touching, and there are few love letters more sad than those which he addressed to Fanny Brawne after he had bid her good-bye ere he started for Italy. Some idea of the intensely bitter anguish of his mind may be gathered from his letters to his friends at this agonising crisis. Thus the following extract from a letter written off Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, indicates his sufferings :—'I wish to write on subjects that will not agitate me much. There is one I must mention and have done with it. Even if my body would recover of itself this

would prevent it. The very thing which I want to live most for will be a great occasion of my death. I cannot help it. Who can help it? were I in health it would make me ill, and how can I bear it in my state. I daresay you will be able to guess on what subject I am harping—you know what was my greatest pain during the first part of my illness at your house. I wish for death every day and night to deliver me from these pains, and then I wish death away, for death would destroy even those pains which are better than nothing.' And then further on in the same letter he writes in the most distressing manner:—'The thought of leaving Miss —— is beyond everything horrible—the sense of darkness coming over me—I eternally see her figure eternally vanishing; some of the phrases she was in the habit of using during my last nursing at Wentworth Place ring in my ears. Is there another life? Shall I awake and find all this a dream? There must be, we cannot be created for this sort of suffering.'

Once more—Equally painful is the subjoined extract from a letter dated Naples, November 1st [1820]:—

The persuasion that I shall see her no more

will kill me. I should have had her when I was in health, and I should have remained well. I can bear to die—I cannot bear to leave her. Oh God! God! God! Everything I have in my trunks that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear. The silk lining she put in my travelling cap scalds my head. My imagination is horridly vivid about her. I see her—I hear her. There is nothing in the world of sufficient interest to direct me from her a moment. This was the case when I was in England. I cannot recollect, without shuddering, the time I was a prisoner at Hunt's, and used to keep my eyes fixed on Hampstead all day. Then there was a good hope of seeing her again. Now—O that I could be buried near where she lives! I am afraid to write to her—to receive a letter from her—to see her handwriting would break my heart. Even to hear of her anyhow, to see her name written, would be more than I can bear.'

The following letter refers to his proposed visit to Italy :—

My dearest Girl,—I have been a walk this morning with a book in my hand, but as usual I have been occupied with nothing but you; I wish

I could say in an agreeable manner. I am tormented day and night. They talk of my going to Italy. 'Tis certain I shall never recover if I am to be so long separate from you; yet with all this devotion to you I cannot persuade myself into any confidence of you.

Past experience connected with the fact of my long separation from you gives me agonies which are scarcely to be talked off. When your mother comes I shall be very sudden and expert in asking her whether you have been to Mrs Dilke's, for she might say no to make me easy.

I am literally worn to death, which seems my only recourse. I cannot forget what has pass'd. What? Nothing with a man of the world, but to me deathful. I will get rid of this as much as possible. When you were in the habit of flirting with Brown you would have left off, could your own heart have felt one half of the one pang mine did. Brown is a good sort of Man—he did not know he was doing me to death by inches. I feel the effect of everyone of those hours in my side now; and for that cause though, he has done me many services, though I know his love and friendship for me, though at this moment I should be without pence were it not for his assistance, I will never see or speak to him until we are both old men, if we are to be.

I *will* resent my heart having been made a football. You will call this madness. I have heard you say that it was not unpleasant to wait a few years, you have amusements—your mind is away—you have not brooded over one idea as I have, and how should you? You are to me an object intensely desirable—the air I breathe in a room empty of you is unhealthy. I am not the same to you—no—you can wait—you have a thousand activities—you can be happy without me. Any party, anything to fill up the day has been enough.

How have you passed this month? Who have you smil'd with? All this may seem savage in me. You do not feel as I do, you do not know what it is to love, one day you may, your time is not come. Ask yourself how many unhappy hours Keats has caused you in Loneliness. For myself I have been a Martyr the whole time, and for this reason I speak; the confession is forc'd from me by the torture. I appeal to you by the blood of that Christ you believe in: Do not write to me if you have done anything this month which it would have pained me to have seen. You may have altered—if you have not—if you still behave in dancing rooms and other societies as I have seen you—I do not want to live—if you have done so I wish this coming night may be my last.

I cannot live without you, and not only you but *chaste you: virtuous you.* The Sun rises and sets, the da[illegible]sses, and you follow the bent of your inclination to a certain extent, you have no conception of the quantity of miserable feeling that passes through me in a day.

Be serious! Love is not a plaything—and again do not write unless you can do it with a crystal conscience. I would sooner die for want of you than ——. Yours for ever,

J. KEATS.

To FANNY BRAWNE.

MY DEAREST FANNY.—My head is puzzled this morning, and I scarce know what I shall say though I am full of a hundred things. 'Tis certain I would rather be writing to you this morning, notwithstanding the alloy of grief in such an occupation, than enjoy any other pleasure, with health to boot, unconnected with you.

Upon my soul I have loved you to the extreme. I wish you could know the Tenderness with which I continually brood over your different aspects of countenance, action and dress. I see you come down in the morning: I see you meet me at the Window: I see everything over again eternally, that I ever have seen. If I get

on the pleasant clue I live in a sort of happy misery, if on the unpleasant 'tis miserable misery.

You complain of my ill-treating you in word, thought and deed—I am sorry,—at times I feel bitterly sorry that I ever made you unhappy—my excuse is that those words have been wrung from me by the sharpness of my feelings. At all events and in any case I have been wrong; could I believe it that I did it without any cause, I should be the most sincere of Penitents. I could give way to my repentant feelings now, I could recant all my suspicions, I could mingle with you heart and Soul though absent, were it not for some parts of your Letters.

Do you suppose it possible I could ever leave you? You know what I think of myself and what of you. You know that I should feel how much it was my loss and how little yours. My friends laugh at you! I know some of them—when I know them all I shall never think of them again as friends or even acquaintance.

My friends have behaved well to me in every instance but one, and there they have become tattlers, and inquisitors into my conduct: spying upon a secret I would rather die than share it with anybody's confidence. For this I cannot wish them well, I care not to see any of them

again. If I am the Theme, I will not be 'the Friend of idle Gossips.

Good god what a shame it is our Loves should be so put into the microscope of a Coterie. Their laughs should not affect you (I may perhaps give you reasons some day for these laughs, for I suspect a few people to hate me well enough, *for reasons I know of*, who have pretended a great friendship for me) when in competition with one, who, if he should never see you again, would make you the Saint of his memory.

These Laughers who do not like you, who envy you for your Beauty, who would have God-bless'd me from you for ever; who were plying me with disencouragements with respect to you eternally.

People are revengeful—do not mind them—do nothing but love me—if I knew that for certain life and health will in such event be a heaven, and death itself will be less painful. I long to believe in immortality—I shall never be able to bid you an entire farewell.

If I am destined to be happy with you here—how short is the longest Life. I wish to believe in immortality*—I wish to live with you for

* Mr Buxton Forman remarks on this passage:—'He was seemingly in a different phase of belief from that in which the death of his brother Tom

ever. Do not let my name ever pass between you and those laughers; if I have no other merit than the great Love for you, that were sufficient to keep me sacred and unmentioned in such society.

If I have been cruel and unjust I swear my love has ever been greater than my cruelty, which last (*sic*) but a minute whereas my Love come what will shall last for ever.

If concession to me has hurt your Pride God knows I have had little pride in my heart when thinking of you. Your name never passes my Lips—do not let mine pass yours. Those people do not like me. After reading my Letter you even then wish to see me. I am strong enough to walk over—but I dare not. I shall feel so much pain in parting with you again.

My dearest love, I am afraid to see you; I am strong, but not strong enough to see you. Will my arm be ever round you again, and if so shall I be obliged to leave you again?

My sweet love! I am happy whilst I believe your first Letter. Let me be but certain that you are mine heart and soul, and I could die more happily than I could otherwise live.

If you think me cruel—if you think I have

found him. At that time he recorded that he and Tom both firmly believed in immortality.

A further indication of his having shifted from the moorings of orthodoxy may be found in the expression in the preceding letter—'I appeal to you by the blood of that Christ you believe in,' not 'we believe in.'—Keats' Works, IV, 185.

sleighted you—do muse it over again and see into my heart. My love to you is true as truth's simplicity and simpler than the infancy of truth, as I think I once said before. How could I sleight you? How threaten to leave you? Not in the spirit of a threat to you—no—but in the spirit of Wretchedness in myself.

My fairest, my delicious, my angel Fanny! do not believe me such a vulgar fellow. I will be as patient in illness and as believing in Love as I am able. Yours for ever my dearest,

JOHN KEATS.

We may quote here the relative passage from 'Troilus and Cressida' (act iii. sc. 2) to which Keats refers in the passage above, a play much read by him:

O that I thought it could be in a woman—
As, if it can, I will presume in you—
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love;
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauty's outward with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays
Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,
That my integrity and truth to you
Might be affronted with the match and weight
Of such a winnow'd purity in love;
How were I then uplifted! but alas!
I am as true as truth's simplicity,
And simpler than the infancy of truth.

The next letter was probably the last one he ever wrote to *Fanny Brawne*, for according to Mr Severn, Keats was absolutely unable to write to her either on the voyage or in Italy. From the heading, it would seem, says Mr Forman that he wrote the letter to the end, and then filled in the words, *My dearest girl*, left out lest any one coming near him, should chance to see them. These words are written more heavily than the beginning of the letter, and indicate a state of pen corresponding with that shown by the words *God bless you* at the end.

I do not write this till the last that no eye may catch it.

My dearest Girl,—I wish you could invent some means to make me at all happy without you. Every hour I am more and more concentrated in you; everything else tastes like chaff in my Mouth.

I feel it almost impossible to go to Italy—the fact is I cannot leave you, and shall never taste one minute's content until it pleases chance to let me live with you for good. But I will not go on at this rate. A person in health as you are can have no conception of the horrors that nerves and a temper like mine go through. What Island do your friends propose retiring to?

I should be happy to go with you there alone,

but in company I should object to it; the backbitings and jealousies of new colonists who have nothing else to amuse themselves, is unbearable. Mr Dilke came to see me yesterday, and gave me a very great deal more pain than pleasure. I shall never be able any more to endure the society of any of those who used to meet at Elm Cottage and Wentworth Place. The last two years taste like brass upon my Palate.

If I cannot live with you I will live alone. I do not think my health will improve much while I am separated from you. For all this, I am averse to seeing you. I cannot bear flashes of light and return into my gloom again. I am not so unhappy now as I should be if I had seen you yesterday.

To be happy with you seems such an impossibility! it requires a luckier Star than mine! it will never be. I enclose a passage from one of your letters which I want you to alter a little.

I want (if you will have it so) the matter express'd less coldly to me. If my health would bear it, I could write a Poem which I have in my head, which would be a consolation for people in such a situation as mine. I would show some one in Love as I am, with a person living in such Liberty as you do.

Shakespeare always sums up matters in the

most sovereign manner. Hamlet's heart was full of such Misery as mine is when he said to Ophelia, 'Go to a nunnery, go, go!' Indeed I should like to give up the matter at once.

I should like to die. I am sickened at the brute world which you are smiling with. I hate men, and women more. I see nothing but thorns for the future—wherever I may be next winter, in Italy or nowhere, Brown will be living near you with his indecencies.

I see no prospect of any rest. Suppose me in Rome—well, I should there see you as in a magic glass, going to and from town at all hours—I wish you could infuse a little confidence of human nature into my heart. I cannot muster any—the world is too brutal for me. I am glad there is such a thing as the grave—I am sure I never shall have any rest till I get there. At any rate I will indulge myself by never seeing any more Dilke or Brown, or any of their Friends.

I wish I was either in your arms full of faith or that a Thunder bolt would strike me. God bless you. J. K.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1822

SHELLEY's first love of importance was Harriet or Harriett Grove, a girl of about eighteen years. This lady rejected him, upon which he wrote to Hogg, 'She is no longer mine! She abhors me as a sceptic, as what *she* was before. O bigotry! when I pardon this last, this severest of thy persecutions, may heaven (if there be wrath in heaven) blast me!'

Harriet Westbrook—the name of Harriet perhaps attracted him—a girl of fifteen was his next love. Her he married, but left for Mary Godwin, aged seventeen, described by one of Shelley's biographers as a girl with shapely golden head, a face very pale and pure, great forehead, earnest hazel eyes, and an expression at once of sensibility and firmness about her delicately curved lips. In the letters quoted

below, Shelley does not write in the enthusiastic strains one would have expected—his correspondence being full of sense and good judgment.

Bagni de Lucca, Florence,
Thursday, 11 *o'clock*, [20 *August* 1818.]

DEAREST MARY,—We have been delayed in this four hours, for the Austrian's minister's passport, but are now on the point of setting out with a vetturino, who engages to take us on the third day to Padua, that is, we shall only sleep three nights on the road . . .

Well, my dearest Mary, are you very lonely? Tell me truth, my sweetest, do you ever cry? I shall hear from you once at Venice, and once on my return here

If you love me you will keep up your spirits—and at all events, tell me the truth about it; for I assure you, I am not of a disposition to be flattered by your sorrow, though I should be by your cheerfulness; and, above all, by seeing such fruits of my absence as were produced when we were at Geneva. What acquaintances have you made? I might have travelled to Padua with a German who had just come from Rome, and had scarce recovered from a malaria fever, caught in the Pontine marshes a week or two since; and I conceded to Claire's entreaties, and to your absent

suggestions, and omitted the opportunity, although I have no great faith in such species of contagion.

It is not very hot, not at all too much so for my sensations, and the only thing that incommodes me are the gnats at night who roar like so many humming tops in one's ear. . .

Adieu, my dearest girl, I think we shall soon meet. I shall write again from Venice. Adieu, Dear Mary.

Bagni di Lucca, Sunday Morning,
23d Aug. 1818.

My dearest Mary,—We arrived here last night at twelve o'clock, and it is now before breakfast the next morning. I can of course tell you nothing of the future, and though I shall not close this letter till post time, yet I do not know exactly when that is. Yet, if you are very impatient, look along the letter and you will see another date, when I may have something to relate.

. . . Well, but the time presses. I am now going to the banker's to send you money for the journey, which I shall address to you at Florence, Post-Office. Pray come instantly to Este, where I shall be waiting in the utmost anxiety for your arrival. You can pack up

directly you get this letter, and employ the next day on that. . . . I have been obliged to decide on all these things without you.

I have done for the best—and my own beloved Mary, you must soon come and scold me if I have done wrong, and kiss me if I have done right, for I am sure, I don't know which—and it is only the event that can show. We shall at least be saved the trouble of introductions, and have formed acquaintance with a lady who is so good, so beautiful, so angelically mild, that were she as wise too, she would be quite a ——. Her eyes are like a reflection of yours. Her manners are like yours when you know and like a person.

Do you know, dearest, how this letter was written? By scraps and patches, and interrupted every minute. The gondola is now come to take me to the banker's. Este is a little place, and the house found without difficulty. I shall count four days for this letter, one day for packing, four for coming here—and on the ninth or tenth day we shall meet.

I am too late for the post, but I send an express to overtake it. Enclosed is an order for fifty pounds. If you knew all that I have to do!

Dearest love, be well, be happy, come to me. Confide in your own constant and affectionate

P. B. S.

Kiss the blue-eyed darlings for me, and do not let William forget me. Clara cannot recollect me.

Ravenna, Tuesday, August 15, 1821.

My dearest Love,—I accept your kind present of your picture, and wish you would get it prettily framed for me. I will wear, for your sake, upon my heart this image which is ever present to my mind.

I have only two minutes to write; the post is just setting off. I shall leave this place on Thursday or Friday morning. You would forgive me for my longer stay, if you knew the fighting I have had to make it short. I need not say where my own feelings impel me. Your faithful and affectionate

S.

Once more—to quote a further extract—

My greatest content would be utterly to desert all human society. I would retire with you and our child to a solitary island in the sea; would build a boat, and shut upon my retreat the

flood-gates of the world. I would read no reviews, and talk with no authors. If I dared to trust my imagination, it would tell me there are one or two chosen companions beside yourself whom I should desire.

But to this I would not listen—where two or three are gathered together, the devil is among them. And good, far more than evil impulses, love, far more than hatred, has been to me, except as you have been its object, the source of all sorts of mischief. So on this plan, I would be *alone*, and would devote either to oblivion or to future generations, the overflowings of a mind which, timely withdrawn from the contagion, should be kept fit for no baser object. . . .

We must do one thing or the other—for yourself, for our child, for our existence. The calumnies, the sources of which are deeper probably than we perceive, have ultimately, for object, the depriving us of the means of security and subsistence. You will easily perceive the gradations by which calumny proceeds to pretext, pretext to persecution, and persecution to the ban of fire and water. It is for this, and not because this or that fool, or the whole course of fools, curse and rail, that calumny is worth refuting or chastising.

According to Dr Garnet* the following poem was written in June 1814, and addressed to Mary—

To

Mine eyes were dim with tears unshed;
  Yes, I was firm—thus wert not thou;
My baffled looks did fear yet dread
  To meet thy looks—I could not know
How anxiously they sought to shine
With soothing pity upon mine.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage
  Which preys upon itself alone;
To curse the life which is the cage.
  Of fettered grief that dares not groan,
Hiding from many a careless eye
The scorned load of agony.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,
  The [——] thou alone should be,
To spend years thus, and be rewarded
  As thou, sweet love, requited me
When none were near—Oh! I did wake
From torture for that moment's sake.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet.
  Of peace and pity fell like dew
On flowers half dead; thy lips did meet
  Mine tremblingly; thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain.
Charming away its dream of pain.

* Relics of Shelley. 1862. 161.

We are not happy, sweet! our state
  Is strange and full of doubt and fear;
More need of words that ills abate;—
  Reserve or censure come not near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thee and me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,
  Nor can I live if thou appear
Aught by thyself, or turn thine heart
  Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mark of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

BYRON

1824

When about fifteen years old, Byron falls desperately in love with Mary Anne Chaworth, ten years his senior, who in 1804 was engaged to John Musters, and married the following year. She was 'all that his youthful fancy could paint of beautiful,' but her marriage was unhappy, and she died in 1832, much to Byron's sorrow. He seems to have got over this love trouble, for a year or so later, it is said he nearly had convulsions on hearing of Mary Duff's marriage.

On 2nd July 1809, he took leave of Mrs Musters by some verses and went abroad. At Malta he fell in with a Mrs Spencer Smith, to whom he addressed the verses 'to Florence,' and a passage in Childe Harold (ii. st. 30-3) explaining that his heart was now past the power of loving. On Christmas Eve he reached Athens and stayed

with Theodora Macri, widow of the English vice-consul, who had three beautiful daughters; the eldest, Theresa, having been celebrated by him as the 'Maid of Athens.'

Among the ladies with whom he became acquainted was Lady Caroline Lamb, daughter of the Earl of Bessborough, and who married in June 1805, William Lamb afterwards Lord Melbourne. This lady fell desperately in love with him, and according to Rogers 'absolutely besieged him.' In July 1813, it was rumoured that after a quarrel with Byron at a party, she tried to stab herself with a knife, and then with the fragments of a glass. On her retiring to Ireland, Byron wrote the following letter to which he adds a postscript, expressing his readiness to fly with her:—

My dearest Caroline,—If the tears, which you saw, and know I am not apt to shed; if the agitation in which I parted from you—agitation which you must have perceived through the whole of this nervous affair, did not commence till the moment of leaving you approached; if all I have said and done, and am still but too ready to say and do, have not sufficiently proved what my feelings are, and must ever be, towards you, my love, I have no other proof to offer.



LA GUICCIOLI.

God knows I never knew till this moment the madness of my dear dearest and most beloved friend. I cannot express myself, this is no time for words—but I shall have a pride, a melancholy pleasure, in suffering what you yourself can scarcely conceive, for you do not know me.

I am about to go out with a heavy heart, for my appearing this evening will stop any absurd story to which the events of the day might give rise. Do you think now I am cold and stern and wilful? Will ever others think so? Will your mother ever? The mother to whom we must indeed sacrifice much more, much more on my part than she shall ever know, or can imagine.

'Promise not to love you?' Ah, Caroline, it is past promising! But I shall attribute all concessions to the proper motive, and never cease to feel all that you have already witnessed, and more than ever can be known, but to my own heart—perhaps, to yours. May God forgive, protect, and bless you ever and ever, more than ever.—Your most attached

BYRON.

P.S.—These taunts have driven you to this, my dearest Caroline, and were it not for your mother, and the kindness of your connexions, is there anything in heaven or earth that would have made me so happy as to have made you

mine long ago? And not less now than then, but more than ever *at this time.*

God knows I wish you happy, and when I quit you, or rather you, from a sense of duty to your husband and mother, quit me, you shall acknowledge the truth of what I again promise and vow, that no other, in word nor deed, shall ever hold the place in my affections which is and shall be sacred to you till I am nothing. You know I would with pleasure give up all here or beyond the grave for you, and in refraining from this must my motives be misunderstood?

I care not who knows this, what use is made of it—it is to you and to you only, yourself. I was, and am yours, freely and entirely, to obey, to honour, love, and fly with you, *when, where,* and *how,* yourself might and may determine.

Lady Caroline corresponded with Byron from Ireland till on the eve of her return she received a cruel letter from him to the effect that he was attached to another, and recommending her to correct her vanity, and leave him in peace. The letter, which came to her hands in Dublin, marked with Lady Oxford's coronet and initials, threw her into a fit, she 'lost her brain, was bled, leeched, kept in bed for a week.' The letter

which was printed in 'Glenarvon,' a novel by Lady Caroline Lamb ran as follows:—

LADY CAROLINE LAMB,—I am no longer your lover; and since you oblige me to confess it by this truly unfeminine persecution, learn that I am attached to another, whose name it would of course be dishonest to mention. I shall ever remember with gratitude the many instances I have received of the predilection you have shown in my favour. I shall ever continue your friend, if your ladyship will permit me so to style myself.

And as a proof of my regard, I offer you this advice, correct your vanity, which is ridiculous; exert your absurd caprices on others, and leave me in peace,—Your obedient servant,

BYRON.

In the novel, of course, the letter opens with 'Lady Avondale,' and ends with 'Glenarvon.' According to Medwin, Byron acknowledged the authenticity of this letter.

On January 2, 1815, Byron was married to Miss Millbanke, a marriage which turned out as unhappy as could be; a separation eventually took place, after which Byron left his country for ever. In April 1819, when abroad, he met

Teresa, daughter of Count Gamba of Ravenna, who at the early age of sixteen had recently married Count Guiccioli, also of Ravenna. Brought from a convent when fifteen years old, she was offered in the usual way in the marriage market at Ravenna, and eventually was bought by a man old enough to be her grandfather. She at once conceived a passion for Byron, and the two met daily at Venice. According to Medwin, Byron was very much attached to her. His description of the Georgioni in the Manfrini Palace at Venice is meant for the Countess. The beautiful sonnet prefixed to the prophecy of Dante was addressed to her; and the following extract from some stanzas written when he was about to quit Venice and join her at Ravenna, will describe the state of his feelings at that time.

River that rollest by the ancient walls
Where dwells the lady of my love, where she
Walks by the brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me.

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed?

* * * * *

She will look on thee; I have look'd on thee
Full of that thought, and from that moment ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her.

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream;
Yes, they will meet the wave I gaze on now:
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow.

My blood is all meridian, were it not,
I had not left my clime; I shall not be,
In spite of tortures ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love, at least of thee.

It was on August 25, 1819, that Byron wrote at Bologna in her copy of 'Corinne' the following impulsive note, betraying the intensity of his feelings:—

My dearest Teresa,—I have read this book in your garden; my love, you were absent or else I could not have read it. It is a favourite book of yours, and the writer was a favourite friend of mine. You will not understand these English words, and others will not understand them—which is the reason I have not scrawled them in Italian.

But you will recognise the handwriting of him who passionately loved you; and you will divine that, over a book which was yours, he could only think of love.

In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—*Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and hereafter, I feel I exist here;

and I feel I shall exist hereafter, to *what* purpose you will decide; my destiny rests with you, and you are a woman, seventeen years of age, and two out of a convent, I wish you had stayed there, with all my heart, or, at least, that I had never met you in your married state. But all this is too late, I love you, and you love me—at least you *say so*, and *act* as if you *did* so, which last is a great consolation in all events.

But I more than love you, and cannot cease to love you. Think of me sometimes, when the Alps and ocean divide us, but they never will, unless you wish it.

BYRON.

Before long, he became on very intimate terms with this lady, and his conduct, in addition to becoming an open scandal, naturally gave rise to much comment in this country.

The following stanzas were addressed by Byron to Mrs Musters:—

Oh! had my fate been join'd with thine,
As once this pledge appear'd a token,
These follies then had not been mine
For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee these early faults I owe,
To thee, the wise and old reproving:
They know my sins, but do not know
'Twas thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once my soul, like thine, was pure,
And all its rising fires could smother;
But now thy vows no more endure
Bestowed by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
And spoil the blisses that await him;
Yet let my rival smile in joy,
For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel face is gone,
My heart no more can rest with any;
But what it sought in thee alone,
Attempts, alas! to find in many.

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid!
'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee;
Nor Hope, nor Memory yield their aid,
But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures?
These varied loses, these matron's fears,
These thoughtless strains to passions measures-

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd:—
This cheek, now pale from early riot,
With passion's hectic ne'er had flushed,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For nature seem'd to smile before thee ;*
And once my heart abhorr'd deceit,—
For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys,
To think would drive my soul to madness ;
In thoughtless throng and empty noise,
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

Yet, even in these a thought will steal,
In spite of every vain endeavour,—
And friends might pity what I feel,—
To know that thou art lost for ever.

Byron's farewell to Mrs Musters was embodied in these lines :—

When man, expelled from Eden's bowers,
A moment linger'd near the gate—
Each scene recalled the vanished hours
And bade him curse his future fate.

But, wandering on through distant climes,
He learnt to bear his load of grief :
Just gave a sigh to other times,
And found in busier scenes relief.

* 'Our meetings' says Lord Byron in 1822, 'were stolen ones, and a gate leading from Mr Chaworth's grounds to those of my mother was the place of our interviews. But the ardour was all on my side. I was serious, she was volatile ; she liked me as a younger brother, and treated and laughed at me as a boy ; she, however, gave me her picture and that was something to *make* verses upon. Had I married her perhaps the whole tenour of my life would have been different.'



BYRON.

Thus lady !* will it be with me,
And I must view thy charms no more ;
For, while I linger near to thee,
I sigh for all I knew before.

In flight I shall be surely wise,
Escaping from temptation's snare ;
I cannot view my paradise
Without the wish of dwelling there.†

Dec. 2. 1808.

On quitting England he addressed some gentle touching verses to Mrs Musters, full of patriotic sadness, which afford one of the strongest proofs of his intense love and devotion to her—

'Tis done—and shivering in the gale
The bark unfurls her snowy sail ;
And whistling o'er the bending mast,
Loud sings on high the fresh'ning blast ;
And I must from this land be gone,
Because I cannot love but one.

But could I be what I have been,
And could I see what I have seen—
Could I repose upon the breast—
Which once my warmest wishes blest—
I should not seek another zone
Because I cannot love but one.

* In the first copy, 'Thus Mary.'

† In Mr Hobhouse's volume, the line stood, 'Without a wish to enter there.'

'Tis long since I beheld that eye
Which gave me bliss or misery ;
And I have striven, but in vain,
Never to think of it again,
For though I fly from Albion
I still can only love but one.

As some love bird without a mate,
My weary heart is desolate ;
I look around, and cannot trace,
One friendly smile or welcome face,
And ev'n in crowds am still alone,
Because I cannot love but one.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK

1827

In the early part of 1809, public attention was engrossed with a parliamentary enquiry into the conduct of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief; against whom Colonel Wardle, an officer of militia, had brought forward a series of charges to the effect that Mrs Mary Anne Clarke, a once favoured courtesan of the Duke, had carried on a traffic in military commissions with his knowledge and concurrence. During the progress of this investigation the House was in general fully attended. 'Many of its members,' says a late historian, 'appeared highly edified by the equivocal replies and sprightly sallies of the fair, frail one.' The Duke, though blamed for great indiscretion, was acquitted of personal corruption by a vote of the House. He,

however, thought proper to resign his employment. Various circumstances which afterwards transpired tended to throw considerable suspicion on the motives and characters of the persons who instituted the enquiry.

The first extant letter of the Duke of York to Mary Ann Clarke runs thus—

To Mary Ann Clarke.

August 4, 1805.

How can I sufficiently express to My Sweetest My Darling Love, the delight which her dear, her pretty letter gave me, or how much I feel all the kind things she says to me in it. Millions and millions of thanks for it, My Angel! and be assured that my heart is fully sensible of your affection, and that upon it alone its whole happiness depends.

I am, however, quite hurt that my love did not go to the Lewes Races; how kind of her to think of me upon the occasion; but I trust that she knows me too well not to be convinced that I cannot bear the idea of adding to those sacrifices which I am but too sensible that she has made to me.

News, my Angel cannot expect from me from hence; though the life led here, at least in the family I am in, is very hurrying, there is a same-

ness in it, which affords little subject for a letter; except Lord Chesterfield's family there is not a single person, except ourselves that I know. Last night we were at the play, which went off better than the first night.

Dr O'Meara called on me yesterday morning and delivered me your letter; he wishes * much to preach before Royalty, and if I can put him in the way of it I will.

What a time it appears to me already, my darling, since we parted; how impatiently I look forward to next Wednesday sennight!

God bless you, my own dear, dear love! I shall miss the post if I add more, oh! believe me, ever to my last hour,—Yours and yours alone

Addressed—

MRS CLARKE
To be left at the
Post Office
Worthing.

Indorsed—

DR O'MEARA.

Standgate, August 24, 1804.

How can I sufficiently express to my darling love my thanks for her dear, dear letter or the delight which the assurances of her love give me?

* It is said that he obtained his wish, but that is of little importance to the present purpose.

Oh my angel! do me justice and be convinced that there never was a woman adored as you are. Every day, every hour, convinces me more and more that my whole happiness depends upon you alone. What a time it appears to be since we parted and with what impatience do I look forward to the day after to-morrow. There are, still however, two whole nights before I shall clasp my darling in my arms!

How happy am I to learn that you are better. I still, however, will not give up my hopes of the cause of your feeling uncomfortable. Clavering* is mistaken, my angel, in thinking that any new regiments are to be raised; it is not intended, only second Battalions to the existing Corps; you had better, therefore, tell him so, and that you were sure that there would be no use in applying for him.

Ten thousand thanks, my love, for the handkerchiefs, which are delightful; and I need not, I trust, assure you of the pleasure I feel in wearing them, and thinking of the dear hands who made them for me.

Nothing could be more satisfactory than the tour I have made, and the state in which I have found everything. The whole of the day before yesterday was employed in visiting the Works at

* Colonel, afterwards made Brigadier-General.

Dover; reviewing the troops there and examining the coast as far as this place. From Folkstone I had a very good view of those of the French camp.

Yesterday, I first reviewed the camp here, and afterwards the 14th Light Dragoons, who are certainly in very fine order; and from thence proceeded to Brabourne Lees to see four regiments of Militia; which altogether took me up near thirteen hours. I am now setting off immediately to ride along the coast to Hastings, reviewing the different Corps as I pass, which will take me at least as long. Adieu, therefore, my sweetest, dearest love, till the day after to-morrow, and be assured that to my last hour I shall ever remain yours and yours alone.

Addressed—

GEORGE FARQUHAR, Esq.,*
No. 18 Gloucester Place,
Portman Square.

Indorsed—

GENERAL CLAVERING, &c.
Postmark
Folkstone.

Subsequently he sends her his box for the play.

* The fictitious address used by the Duke of York when writing to Mrs Clarke.

'My Darling shall have the ticket for the box the moment I go home. God bless you.'

And then again we read—

'Inclosed my Darling receives the note, as well as the money, which she should have had some days ago.'

Then after the separation, *exit* 'my Darling,' and the tune of the letters is changed.

'I do not know what you mean. I have never authorized anybody to plague or disturb you, and therefore you may be perfectly at your ease on my account.'

And sending her two hundred pounds to go out of town, he writes,

'Inclosed I send you the money, which you wished to have for your journey.'

The final blow is given in the following letter:—

You must recollect the occasion which obliged me, above seven months ago, to employ my solicitor in a suit with which I was then threatened on your account. The result of those inquiries first gave me reason to form an unfavourable opinion of your conduct; you cannot therefore accuse me of rashly or hastily deciding against you.

But after the proofs which have at last been brought forward to me, and which it is impossible for you to controvert, I owe it to my own character and situation to abide by the resolution which I have taken, and from which it is impossible for me to recede.

An interview between us must be a painful task to both, and can be of no possible advantage to you. I must therefore decline it.

May 1806.

FREDERIC AUGUSTUS, GEORGE IV

1830

This Prince of Wales who was educated with much strictness by Dr Markham, subsequently Archbishop of York, and Dr Hurd, subsequently Bishop of Worcester, having lived for some time with Mrs Robinson abandoned her, and at the age of 23, attached himself to Mrs Fitzherbert at the age of 30. a widow, a beauty and a rigid Catholic. The lady's maiden name was Smith or Smythe—the matter is left in painful uncertainty —and an opinion was prevalent that a marriage, after the rite of the Roman Church, took place between them. His subsequent marriage with Caroline, Princess of Brunswick, on the condition of the payment of his debts, which, we are told, were something about £200,000 sterling by the nation, is matter of school history.

The intimate knowledge of the humours and

dispositions of persons of exalted rank has ever been a subject, if not of utility, of desire. The following letters are distinguished by an elegant simplicity and a charming candour. They passed between a man in a situation of life eminent and little controlled, and a woman comparatively humble in position, but adorned with such sentiments as have been always understood to do honour to her sex. All who wish may find in them principles of honour and philanthropy which cannot but improve every sensible mind.

The first letter of the lady,

FROM MARGARITTA[1] to *****[2]

'Princes, like woman, find few real friends,
All who approach them their own ends pursue,
Lovers and ministers are seldom true.'

So spake a bard—well used to Courts and my sex—to you, my ******[3] I ought, agreeable to the style of those who surround you, to pay an implicit obedience, and meet you as you desired on my quitting the ball-room last night. Meet you!—what you?—the ****** of *****[4]! whose character in the annals of gallantry is too well known for me to suppose that after such a meeting—I should have any character at all. This may be too free—I am unused to address

(1) Mrs Fitzherbert; (2) Wales; (3) Prince; (4) Prince of Wales;

people of excessive rank—my manners are unaffected—I know not a sentiment that I would wish to disguise, and I should be happy to know only that behaviour from your *****(5) ********* that must command silent respect from—Your father's affectionate subject,

MARGARITTA.

FROM ***** TO MARGARITTA.

I find but too often cause to lament that rank in life—that perhaps is envied me by all the world—Princes indeed have few real friends—Even your sex fly me—and does the amiable Margaritta allow her better judgment to be biassed by public calumny? It is beneath the heart that reigns in so lovely a bosom! I do not command—far from it—I only entreat a further knowledge of you, and where is the impropriety of permitting me a meeting—a condescension that will make me most happy—not your ****** the son of your *********(6) but your admiring, your adoring

*****

FROM MARGARITTA TO *****

Public calumny I am above—my own reasons

(5) Royal Highness. (6) Sovereign.

and observation are the charms that forbid a private meeting—already has the notice bestowed on me at the ball by your ***** ******** brought on me, the envy of my own sex, and the impertinence of yours. I like not your associates, particularly that wild man, H*****, he stares me out of countenance, the difference of our rank in life forbids a further knowledge of me, I entreat you to avoid me, I shall be to-night at the ball, not because I like it, but my not having appeared since the last is I find observed; and some of our visitors yesterday told me I was too much engaged by the ******'s notice, to bestow any on those beneath him!—Come to the ball—dance with Lady C********* B*****, and take the slightest notice of me. Why should you wish to take more? there are a hundred much prettier women! Mrs O******* for example—you think her pretty—she is indeed divine! and she has a husband, an officer of spirit, to shield her from the rude attacks of envy. You may enjoy her conversation—she yours—and malice dare not speak—but *me*, an unprotected helpless orphan? It will be cruel to pursue the Humble

MARGARITTA.

From ***** to Margaritta.

Cold, unkind, Margaritta! Why am I forbid that attention which is your due—which all the world must pay you. Why am I doomed to pass an insipid evening with a woman of fashion *only*, when my heart and my better judgment would lead me to the most elegant, the most accomplished fair that B******* has to boast. Mrs O******* is beauteous, but it is not mere beauty I admire—it is expression, 'a something than beauty dearer.' You know my opinion of Lady O******** B *****; her rank entitles her to my hand, nothing besides could induce me. I respect her Grace for the sake of the best of mothers and of S****'s—and therefore I comply with what politeness and etiquette requires; but why must I give up the enjoyment of your conversation. Be superior to common talk.

Call not yourself unprotected,—all the world must be your friends. I am concerned H***** displeases you. I am certain he never designed it. This wild man has really some good points; that he admires you I wonder not, and perhaps he is not perfectly delicate in that admiration. Does S******** likewise displease you, and little J***** O***** ; that you say you do not like my

associates? If they do, they shall not trouble you:—I want no company when in yours!

I felt your absence from the ball, and rejoice that you will grace it this evening. It is impossible to see you with indifference! In vain would you exact so hard a task from the tenderest of your friends,—The obliged

*****

FROM ***** TO MARGARITTA.

What a disappointment. Ah, cruel Margaritta! I entered the ball-room last night at nine, in the highest spirits. My eyes flew round it with impatience, in search of the only bright object they wished to see—but they sought in vain! I asked H***** and S******** after you, they had seen you airing—not dressed for the ball—I was disconcerted! Is it possible, so gentle a form, a countenance so soft, so tender, can be thus unkind? I danced with Lady C——, B*****, H*****, with a Mrs B*****, pretty and animated, and I was persuaded at about one o'clock to join them in a Scotch reel, with the little C******, who is far from handsome, but dances well. The small company that remained were diverted—but nothing could re-animate my spirits. Why do you thus fly me?—once more

I entreat a meeting; let it be at your own house if you please; where is the impropriety; if you grace not the C**** (which hundreds may rejoice at), why refuse attentions that are most due to you. I wish not to be considered here in my public character—much less by you—than as any other private gentleman, whose eyes and whose heart assure him you are most worthy his regard.

I esteem a character that I would not injure; report says yours is faultless as your form—allow me—permit me—a further knowledge of you; you will not find me, I trust, undeserving of your good opinion--but that I shall always remain --Your devoted and admiring

*****

FROM MARGARITTA TO *****

Surprised that I was not at the ball!—recollect your letter in the morning--*it [illegible] possible to see you with indifference*; what then was I to expect! No one thing that I wish'd.—You imagine I doubt not that my vanity would have been so well gratified, that reason would have been silent. Had I suffered the woman wholly to prevail this must have been the case; but a thousand combining circumstances have almost quell'd the foibles of my sex, and vanity you must



MRS. FITZHERBERT.

suppose dead in me—when I withdraw thus from your notice. And yet I wish your friendship,—am deeply interested in your fame, and desire most ardently that you may be as eminent in goodness as in rank. I cannot receive your visits, the family I am with would leave the place immediately on such an event. They are what the world calls extreme good people—what I should call outrageous. They are not of the number of your friends.

Your first unfortunate vote in the house—against our gracious S******** they will never forgive, and it is vain that I urge the impetuosity of youth, that love of independence so natural to all,—that from reason you gave not that vote;—I dare believe you never thought about it. F** desired it, and you was glad to *appear* to have a will of your own.

But why enter I into politics, yet you make me a politician. I was violent for P***,—I now dislike him, but like not F** notwithstanding. A man of bad private character,—though of the greatest talents and blest with uncommon genius—can never deserve the love of a worthy heart.

I air'd* last night to L****, and paid a very

* A curious term, which seems to have dropped out of the language. It has been connected with *air*, the lower atmosphere, but is really derived from the Latin *iter*, and signifies to travel or journey, so

'Of nakyd knyghtes
Bot *airis* even forth him ane.'

Alexander Stevenson, ed., 5,523.

stupid visit, yet was I not dissatisfied. It was a proper sacrifice to prudence. I am now going a sailing. Our party is large, the day is fine, and the gale favourable. If you write again be cautious how your letter is given me. I think it needless to desire you to destroy mine. They have no merit to entitle them to preservation; and as they are not directed or signed with my real name, I think they can never be made public. Yet I am not without fear. Such trash would be a treasure to the printer, and the very initials of your name would sell a book wonderfully.

ADIEU.

Do you indeed wish for my friendship! Ah! Margaritta, I know not how to believe you:—while thus cold thus insensible to all my desires. A meeting again refused:—who are these very good people, whom I have so much reason to dislike, they have no paternal authority I understand; why then regard their narrow prejudices? May I entreat your history: yet I almost dread to hear an account of a life in which I am already so much interested, and which may make me still more enamoured of the dear perverse historian. Politics I should never have mentioned to a lady, but as you seem to blame my conduct, I wish to exculpate myself in your opinion, but you must

allow me to do it personally, for the subject is too long for a letter. On horseback you might permit me the pleasure of attending you,—I have seen you riding with only a servant;—let me join you without any, I never ride but with one here, and he shall be forbid, because my livery would carry a mark that you would not like. Your servant would not know me, and report would have nothing to say about it. I entreat you to allow me this; and appoint an early day. Your letters I keep as an invaluable treasure, and shall hardly be so careless of them as you expect. So young, so lovely, and yet so coldly prudent. Ah! Margaritta would that you partook of the warmth that burns in the heart of your faithful

*****

I have not been well! that fickle element on which with so much pleasure I embarked greatly disordered me; quiet and gentle exercise has been prescribed and I am at present forbid riding on horseback.

I entreat you attempt not to visit me: you will not be admitted, and *you ought not* to subject yourself to a refusal. Sure there is a haughty inflexibility about me that should make you cease to wish for more acquaintance; why

do you pursue me with such unwearied attentions. I saw you on the beach when I was brought on shore; I could not avoid returning your graceful compliments. The sailors who carried me told me it was your H******** Everyone knows you!—My servant I doubt not amongst the rest. I heard S********* pronounce my name with an encomium I did not approve; I perceived that he would have led you towards me. I thank you my friend for retiring: I am above affectation, and you may believe me grateful when I say, *I thank you.* To show that gratitude I will comply with your request, and speak of my past life.

Parental authority I never knew; parental love and tenderness once blest me. But now no father, mother or brother can I boast! my adverse fate has snatched each dear relation from me, and left a void no time can ere fill up. Nursed in the lap of tenderness, my infant hours in sweet succession flew; and when, 'dawning reason shed her ray benign,' maternal love watched o'er each growing sense and formed my heart by reason's purest rules. My father who had the honour of a captain's commission in the army, was a man of letters and gave up all the hours he could take from his profession to educate his Frederick; 'so we grew together—like to a

double cherry, seeming parted—but yet an union in partition.'

My brother gained with applause his twentieth year; he had a friend who rivall'd him in every grace, and Frederick's virtues shone brighter in the noble Edmund—I loved them both, but something always told me I loved Edmund best. I thought my brother wrong'd by the preference, but it was allow'd by all our charming circle to be just, and hope and fancy painted such a set of bright illusions that happiness seemed all my own. Suddenly the prospect darkened. My parents in one fatal hour were torn from my embrace by death's unrelenting hand!—thus dash'd from joy I thought myself most wretched!—but fate soon shew'd me that my woes were not complete. Frederick and Edmund—they are not!—they fell in——, but the hour of anguish insupportable is past!—let me not recall it!—o'er my pensive head calm resignation waves her healing wand and I have learnt to bear disappointment patiently.

The family I am with I have obligations to, but not of a pecuniary kind. The fortunes of our house were not inconsiderable and they, alas! have centred all in me!—Edmund's also!—and here I am wooing health for the sake of society, which has some claims on everyone; example not

the least. Adieu! recollection overpowers me! I can write no more.

Your tale of woe has greatly affected me!—how pathetic, how elegant are all your expressions! I apprehended but too justly the effect your history would have over me; for I love, I esteem you more than ever! Start not at the sound, but let me indeed be your friend:—thank you for so kind an appellation, I will deserve it. I rejoice that you was pleased with my self-denial. S********* did indeed want me to welcome you on shore; and I felt that I wish'd it more than him, but I did not know all the party, and was afraid of displeasing you.

I hope you are not indeed indisposed. Though it hurts my vanity to suppose you so unwilling to grant me a meeting; I shou'd be still more pain'd at your illness, and perhaps rashly venture to enter a house where my presence wou'd be unwelcome.

To satisfy your punctilio I never venture to join you on the Steine, and take no other notice of you than what politeness will authorise. To a mind generous as Margaritta's, this wish to oblige cannot pass unnoticed, and I flatter myself the day will come when she will condescend to

reward by her presence the respectful distance—the unwearied attention of her

*****

Your vanity may rest secure; I am really too ill to venture on horseback. If you attempt to visit me, you will neither see or hear more of

MARGARITTA.

I was drawn to the Steine this evening by a party who drank tea with us and would not excuse me, (tho' I was really too ill to go out) because it was generally believed that your ***** ******** in imitation of a ridiculous Frenchman was to run a race backwards! Oh! that you had a Mentor to guard you from those numerous perils that around you wait!—the greatest of which are your present companions. As I beheld you the other day like another Harry:—

'Rise from the ground like feathered Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into your seat
As if an angel dropt down from the clouds;
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus.
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.'

I could not avoid continuing the comparison, and wishing that you would sometimes use that Prince's words:—

'Reply not to me with a fool born jest,
For Heaven doth know, so shall the world perceive;
That I have turn'd away my former self,
So will I those that kept me company.'

Adieu!—if I am too free remember it is your own condescension that draws on you the remarks of

MARGARITTA.

If you wish me a Mentor—let me entreat you to assume that character yourself: no one can be more capable or so agreeable to me: and you know not the good effect this may have; but I must at the same time desire you will not give credit to all the idle reports you may hear to my disadvantage, as was the ridiculous one you mention:—if my situation in life makes me many friends, it likewise makes me many enemies, and you will allow for this. Your reproofs so far from offending, (which Margaritta could not do) convinces me of a kind interest you take in my future welfare, and flatters me extremely. I answer you from the same author,—Warwick speaks thus to Henry IV:

'My gracious Lord, you look beyond him quite,
The Prince but studies his companions
Like a strange tongue wherein to gain the language;
'Tis needful that the most unmodest word
Be look'd upon and learn'd, which once attain'd
Your Highness knows comes to no further use,

But to be known and hated—so like gross terms,
The Prince will in the perfectness of time
Cast off his followers, and their memory
Shall as a pattern or a measure live;
By which his Grace must meet the lives of others
Turning past evils to advantages.'

You admire Shakespeare, I perceive! he is indeed an author that all people of taste must love to enthusiasm; I have read this play with attention, and a time may come when I may likewise surprise my subjects, if my better genius, which shines forth in the sweet form of the haughty, yet lovely Margaritta will deign to add her influence; which like the sun may draw some latent blossom from an expiring plant, that otherwise would sink into obscurity.

My companions, you must allow, are mostly men of rank and family; and one that you see frequently with me, whose extraordinary history I had the pleasure of giving you one night at the ball, has the sanction of being the almost adopted child of a ***** I venerate, and who all the world agree in pronouncing the best, the most perfect of mortals; and with justice allow her those many virtues which I see her daily exercise,—— till I adore her worth, and wish to be deserving of such a parent. In my friendship to him, I pay a just compliment to this best of mothers; while I give a double pleasure to myself. Poor

H***** I pity; and he has his merits. Lord C******* has been an unkind brother to him—H***** too generous in return; he has a fund of humour that is always entertaining, and a fine voice. S******** is young and giddy as myself. J**** O***** amuses me; I can say nothing in his praise; he has nothing indeed to boast but his coachmanship; such characters are necessary in society.

But I have engaged you too long. Correct me with friendship and I will prove worthy your esteem,—The obliged

*****

'Tis seldom when the bee doth leave her comb
In the dead carrion.'

It is the answer of a King to your quotation, and I can make no better; Shakespeare is indeed a very great favourite of mine; he paints all his characters so much to the life, that every line of his is interesting to me. I confess the three plays of the Henrys are more particularly so. You say you have read the first part of Henry IV with attention, see you not a strange similarity in Hal!—sweet Hal; the present values himself that his companions are *mostly* men of rank and family; when I have urged this by way of excuse I have been told,—so much the worse—they will

not be so soon shaken off, they must be provided for, for are they not all needy men.

I desire no answer to all this:—I am unfit for a Mentor; you compliment too highly in your wish that I would become one.

Seek me not I entreat you, forget, or remember that I am *only* the haughty

MARGARITTA.

You reject all my wishes with a haughty disdain that greatly mortifies me. I am open to correction, I avow my errors. I wish you to assume a character which you are most fit to shine in, and which may be of infinite service to me; but I wish and entreat in vain!—unkind Margaritta.

Even the words of an author I passionately admire is quoted against me. Thus you turn me from a book—I might profit from; for when I attempt to read it, it reminds me of the cold, the severe fair one, whose friendship I have most wish'd to cultivate, who attributes to me all the faults of my predecessor Hal, and believes me incapable to finish the character.

Am I to answer all the idle, the unjust things you hear to my disadvantage? Pardon my heat, I am disappointed! Hurt, I acknowledge; but

my heart feels now much more so, at the sickly pale of the finest cheek which I beheld this morning! Had I not some merit when I met you on horseback not to join you? I debated it for half a moment; but the reserved air with which you returned my compliments determined me. I was repaid in the look you afterwards gave me, for I thought in that look you approv'd my discretion.

Sickness only, I hope, has chilled that heart formed for more generous sensations. Your restoration to health I earnestly wish, and your return to tender feelings. Judge for yourself if I am not your attentive

TELEMACHUS.

I was beloved by Edmund, I was the sister of Frederick, and can you wonder I have pride. I lov'd Edmund, and are you surprised at my coldness? Perhaps it is not possible for any but a pre-engaged heart to behold you without feeling sentiments of tenderness. My heart is dead to love, but it glows with every other passion with greater ardour. My friendship is warm and constant, nothing but your own imprudence can ever deprive you of it.

I feel myself obliged for your attention to my wishes in not joining me when on horseback. I

find great benefit by that exercise, and shall pursue it. If my grateful look repaid you I am happy. You think me severe I know, but you know not the just reasons I have to appear so. You are impatient of restraint—above appearances; but, believe me, your rank requires rather more than common attention, for every eye is on you. Adieu, my dear Telemachus.

MARGARITTA.

Every eye is, alas, too severely on me—cold Margaritta.—Yes; you have lov'd, but why mortify me on this subject. I have (though the world believes it not) some delicacy in my love—where it aspires to so bright an object, and I could have wish'd you had never felt this passion so baneful to repose. How happy to have first awoke in the most gentle breast so sweet a feeling.

The lamented and envied Edmund, why does he engross *all* of so large, so good a heart! allow me but a share! let the living supply the place of the valued departed. Convince me of that flattering sentiment of yours, 'that perhaps none but a pre-engaged heart'—I cannot have the vanity to finish so great a compliment: whose only charm is the being wrote by the fair hand of Margaritta.

HAL.

You are a dangerous encroacher; my last had not reached your hands before I had blamed myself for the kindness of my conclusion. Werter would have lived an age on such a one; we see how it once rejoiced him. We ought to write no more to each other:—it is very silly.

I never ought to forget Edmund;—and you—what ought you not to remember—to make you forget

MARGARITTA.

Are you then sensible my amiable Margaritta, of an increase of that passion I wish to awaken in your gentle heart. Let me flatter myself that you will one day feel a tender friendship for me. Even reason devoid of passion will authorise this wish, and why need Edmund be forgot? why so frequently mention the lamented man? yet you may love his memory and esteem the living.

Do not suppose yourself wrong in indulging me with your letters neither; I entreat you compare me not to the weak—the passionate Werter. If my passion is less ardent—it is better founded;—for who can equal my Charlotte.

*****

You will compel me to leave B*******, I am

offended at your behaviour of last night. Why did I seek a walk retired? had we met on the Steine you would have been more guarded; alas! you have not the delicacy I wished! When you talk of love you offer an insult you are insensible of—your friendship confers honour;—but your love—retain it for some worthy fair, born to the high honour of becoming your wife, and repine not that fate has placed my lot—in humble life. I am content with my station: content has charms that are not to be expressed. I know I am wrong in continuing this correspondence;—it must—it ought to cease: write therefore no more to

MARGARITTA.

You alarm me with the idea of your leaving ********, you pain me with your coldness. Ah! Margaritta would it were possible to entreat your acceptance of the hand where the heart is all your own. Why is this forbid me? cruel situation, forbid that highest pleasure which every subject enjoys. I cannot but repine! temper calm as yours may endure without complaining; you have suffered, you have learned to bear: but I, bred up with high hopes; young, warm and sanguine, disappointment is a dagger that wounds

most sorely! Do not then most amiable of women, oh! do not add to my misfortunes your displeasure, forgive a conduct I already see the impropriety of; allow for my unhappy situation.

Painful pre-eminence, would that I could lay it aside; or that I might be permitted to introduce as a daughter to her ******* virtues congenial to her own. To a ***** who greatly wants it—so bright an example. To my subjects so amiable a *********—vain delusion! I know,—I regret the impossibility; deprive me not of your friendship—of your valued presence; your inestimable letters; but try to give comfort to that heart which is all your own.

*****

This morn as slumbering on my couch I lay,
Fancy presented to my anxious view;
The glorious honors of a distant day,
That waits to realize itself in you.

I saw where Britain's genius pensive lies,
Revolving past and future in their turn;
I heard her prayers with purest incense rise;
While hope and fear within her bosom burns.

Thy guardian angel hovered o'er her head,
And smil'd benignant on the anxious fair;
Around her soft perfumes their odours shed
And sounds of music murmur'd through the air.



GEORGE IV.

Genius of Britain, rise, the spirit cry'd,
Nor heed the slander of the present hour;
Long shall thy island boast of kings the pride;
And he who reigns shall long maintain his pow'r.

When crown'd with years he nobly shall expire,
To meet the bright award that waits his fame;
Another shall to all his worth aspire,
My darling charge—and George the Fourth his name.

MARGARITTA.

This fit of poetry appears to have been too much for H. R. H.—at any rate the correspondence here closes.

WILLIAM HAZLITT

1830

HAZLITT, the charming essayist, the accomplished critic, the true poet, the subtle wit, and the refined philosopher distinguished himself, and himself, assisted by his grandson and a bosom friend, communicated the story of his distinction to the public, by falling in love—another Cophetua —with a tailor's daughter. His epistles to her, says his grandson, are the 'unconnected and inconsequent outpourings of an imagination always superlatively vivid, and now morbidly so.' To the present writer they seem good, honest love letters, plain, truthful, modest, and sincere. She was not his only love, but she was his greatest. Miss Windham, Miss Ralston, Miss Sally Shepherd,—his large heart had capacity for them all. In the meantime, Mrs Hazlitt, whose love was not equally wide, agreed with him to dissolve as far as possible,

a marriage contract which had become a burden to both, on the ground of incompatibility.

It was in 1820. William Hazlitt fell in love at first sight with Miss Sarah Walker, daughter of a tailor, in whose house he lodged. She told him 'her affections were engaged,' (it is a curious figure by which we speak of affections as if they were places in a theatre or a railway carriage), and he called her his *Infelice*—which she certainly did not understand. His whole wooing was beyond all doubt of a sibylline character to this pretty maid-servant. She reminded him, it is said somewhat vaguely, of the old Madonnas. Hazlitt, like another Pygmalion, proposed to infuse in her splendid form a new mind and soul. 'She came,' says her lover '(I know not how) and sat by my side, and was folded in my arms, a vision of love and joy—as if she had dropped from the heavens to bless me by some special dispensation of a favouring providence—to make me amends for all. And now, without any fault of mine but too much love, she has vanished from me and I am left to wither.' It was all in vain for Sarah to say, "Sir, I told you I could feel no more for you than friendship,"' Hazlitt insisted upon loving on. Meantime the divorce proceeded But Hazlitt continued to wither. He could not even, till he was restored to her favour, look

upon the face of his little boy. He was enclosed in a dungeon of despair—the sky above him was marble—he was stung with scorpions—his flesh crawled.

Anon came intervals of relief. He holds converse with her little sister Betsy, unburdens himself and is comforted. He jots down minutes of his sufferings in his *Liber Amoris*, and receives satisfaction. He wears a locket containing her hair round his neck, and is spiritually consoled. He feels as Adam must have done when Eve was created for him, and if 'her heavenly air is taken from him, it leaves him'—this is a trifle prosaic—'gasping.'

At last the common end of all true love arrives—he meets her with another man. This is a former lodger, a Mr C——. Then his blood is of molten lead. Then Sally Walker is a regular lodging-house decoy.

The divorce is obtained, but to what end? Hazlitt marries somebody else, from whom he in a short time separates himself. It is probable that he never got wholly well of this disease of love for his tailor's daughter.

The timid nature of the love of this poet and scholar, for this unamiable and comparatively uninstructed girl would be very ludicrous were it not so very sad. He is satisfied with such

crumbs—such little crumbs of comfort. He receives them from his beloved object as an eleemosynary dole. He is happy because she assures him when he had taken her with her mother to see 'Romeo and Juliet,' (and paid doubtless for the admission of them both) that he had not lessened her pleasure at the play by his being with her. It was for him a delicious sensation to think that she once made him believe that he was not hated by her he loved, and for this he owes her more than he can ever pay. And he is more anxious to do well now, as he wishes her to hear him well spoken of.

It is all so natural, 'Tis true 'tis pity, pity 'tis 'tis true.'

It was his own wish—it is so stated in the preface to the *Liber Amoris*, that what had been his strongest feeling while living, should be preserved in this shape when he was no more. In the hearts of readers, according to their differing constitutions, will sympathy or amusement arise out of the following records.

A PROPOSAL OF LOVE*

(GIVEN TO HER IN OUR EARLY ACQUAINTANCE)

'Oh! if I thought it could be in a woman
As if it can, I will presume in you,

* The same passage is, curiously enough, referred to by Keats, vid., page 91.

To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love,
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauties outward with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays:
Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,
That my integrity and truth to you
Might be confronted with the match and weight
Of such a winnowed purity in love—
How were I then uplifted! But, alas,
I am as true as truth's simplicity,
And simpler than the infancy of truth.'

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

Feb. 1822.

You will scold me for this, and ask me if this is keeping my promise to mind my work. One half of it was to think of Sarah; and besides I do not neglect my work either, I assure you. I regularly do ten pages a day, which mounts up to thirty guineas' worth a week, so that you see I should grow rich at this rate, if I could keep on so; *and I could keep on so*, if I had you with me to encourage me with your sweet smiles, and share my lot. The Berwick smacks sail twice a week, and the wind sets fair. When I think of the thousand endearing caresses that have passed between us, I do not wonder at the strong attachment that draws me to you, but I am sorry for my own want of power to please. I hear the wind sigh through the lattice, and keep repeating

over and over to myself two lines of Lord Byron's tragedy—

> 'So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,
> Here and hereafter, if the last may be.'

applying them to thee, my love, and thinking whether I shall ever see thee again. Perhaps not—for some years at least—till both thou and I are old—and then when all else have forsaken thee, I will creep to thee, and die in thine arms.

You once made me believe I was not hated by her I loved: and for that sensation—so delicious was it, though but a mockery and a dream—I owe you more than I can ever pay. I thought to have dried up my tears for ever the day I left you: but as I write this they stream again. If they did not, I think my heart would burst.

I walk out here of an afternoon and hear the notes of the thrush that comes up from a sheltered valley below, welcome in the spring; but they do not melt my heart as they used; it is grown cold and dead. As you say it will one day be colder.

God forgive what I have written above; I did not intend it; but you were once my little all, and I cannot bear the thought of having lost you for ever, I fear through my own fault.

Has anyone called? Do not send any letters that come. I should like you and your mother

(if agreeable) to go and see Mr Kean in 'Othello,' and Miss Stephens in 'Love in a Village,' if you will, I will write to Mr T—— to send you tickets. Has Mr P—— called? I think I must send to him for the picture to kiss and talk to. Kiss me, my best beloved. Ah! if you can never be mine, still let me be your proud and happy slave.

H.

To this impassioned letter, which is surely inferior to none of the present collection in its loyal sincerity and pathetic self-abnegation, the little tailor's daughter returned the following reply:—

Sir,—I should not have disregarded your injunction not to send you any more letters that might come to you had I not promised the gentleman who left the enclosed to forward it at the earliest opportunity, as he said it was *of consequence*. Mr Patmore called the day after you left town. My mother and myself are much obliged by your kind offer of tickets to the play, but must decline accepting it. My family send their best respects, in which they are joined by —Yours truly,

S. Walker.

This letter, which, as it seems to have been

in no way deserved by the essayist, must also seem to the impartial reader the ugly and ill-bred offspring of cold ingratitude and heartless indifference, cannot indeed, by any elasticity of interpretation, be construed as a love letter. The only excuse for its ill-favoured appearance amongst these missives of love is that it throws into bolder relief the noble and forgiving nature of her lover. It would have been too much for most men, for Hazlitt it was not enough. He writes again :—

March 1822.

—You will be glad to learn I have done my work—a volume in less than a month. This is one reason why I am better than when I came, and another is I have had two letters from Sarah. I am pleased I have got through this job, as I was afraid I might lose reputation by it (which I can little afford to lose)—and besides, I am more anxious to do well now, as I wish you to hear me well spoken of. I walk out of an afternoon and hear the birds sing as I told you, and think, if I had you hanging on my arm, *and that for life*, how happy I should be—happier than I ever hoped to be, or had any conception of till I knew you. '*But that can never be*,'—I hear you answer in a soft, low murmur. Well,

let me dream of it sometimes—I am not happy too often, except when that favourite note, the harbinger of spring, recalling the hopes of my youth, whispers thy name and peace together in my ear.

I was reading something about Mr Macready to-day, and this put me in mind of that delicious night when I went with your mother and you to see 'Romeo and Juliet.' Can I forget it for a moment —your sweet modest looks, your infinite propriety of behaviour, all your sweet, winning ways, your hesitating about taking my arm as we came out, till your mother did, your laughing about nearly losing your cloak, your stepping into the coach without my being able to make the slightest discovery, and oh! my sitting down beside you there, you whom I had loved so long, so well, and your assuring me I had not lessened your pleasure at the play by being with you, and giving me your dear hand to press in mine! I thought I was in heaven, that slender, exquisitely-turned form contained my all of heaven upon earth; and as I folded you—yes, you, my own best Sarah, to my bosom, there was as you say *a tie between us*—you did seem to me, for those few short moments, to be mine in all truth, and honour, and sacredness—oh! that we could be always so.—Do not mock me, for I am a very child in love. I ought to beg pardon for behaving

so ill afterwards, but I hope the *little image* made it up between us, etc.

To this letter, writes Hazlitt, I have received no answer—not a line. The rolling years of eternity will never fill up that blank. Where shall I be? What am I? Or where have I been?

Afterwards we find written in a blank leaf of 'Endymion,' 'I want a hand to guide me, an eye to cheer me, a bosom to repose on; all which I shall never have, but shall stagger into my grave, old before my time, unloved and unlovely, unless S. L. keeps her faith with me.

* * * * *

But by her dove's eyes and serpent shape, I think she does not hate me; by her smooth forehead and her crested hair, I own I love her; by her soft looks and queen-like grace (which men might fall down and worship), I swear to live and die for her.

His last letter.

To S. L.

MY DEAR MISS L.—*Evil to them that evil think* is an old saying; and I have found it a true

* Of Buonaparte, with which he had presented her.

one. I have ruined myself by my unjust sus picions of you. Your sweet friendship was the balm of my life, and I have lost it I fear for ever, by one fault and folly after another.

What would I give to be restored to the place in your esteem which you assured me I held only a few months ago! Yet I was not contented, but did all I could to torment myself and harass you by endless doubts and jealousy. Can you not forget and forgive the past, and judge of me by my conduct in future? Can you not take all my follies in the lump, and say, like a good, generous girl, 'Well, I'll think no more of them.' In a word, may I come back and try to behave better. A line to say so would be an additional favour to so many already received by,—Your obliged friend, and sincere well-wisher.

He has 'no answer from her' and is 'mad.'

At last comes the discovery of an amour—which most people not equally guileless with Hazlitt would have long ago suspected—with one C—— a former lodger. Then she is 'a practised, callous jilt, a regular lodging-house decoy, played off by her mother upon the lodgers one after another. She discovers the most hardened indifference to the feelings of others, she shows no regard to her own character or shame when she

is detected.' So writes Hazlitt with the natural and probable exaggeration of the disappointed and discarded lover. 'She knows what she is' he thus concludes his *Liber Amoris*, 'so that my overweening opinion of her must have appeared like irony or direct insult. Besides she looks but indifferently.' Oh Hazlitt! thus to describe the inexpressive she. 'She is diminutive in stature. I am afraid she will soon grow common to my imagination, as well as worthless in herself. Her image seems fast "going into the wastes of time" like a weed that the wave bears farther and farther from me.'

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1832

PRIOR to his engagement with Charlotte Carpenter, Sir Walter Scott had already experienced a disappointment in love. 'It was a proud night with me,' he one day exclaimed, 'when I first found that a pretty young woman could think it worth her while to sit and talk with me, hour after hour, in a corner of the ball-room, while all the world were capering in our view.'

The 'pretty young woman' here specially alluded to had occupied his attention, says his biographer J. G. Lockhart, 'long before he ever appeared in the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms, or any of his friends took note of him as "setting up for a squire of dames."' We are told that their acquaintance began in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where rain beginning to fall one

Sunday as the congregation were leaving church, Sir Walter Scott offered his umbrella to a certain young lady. His offer was accepted, and so he had the pleasure of escorting her to her residence which happened to be at no great distance from his own. A propos of this occurrence it may be remembered that in one of his last articles for the *Quarterly Review* Sir Walter Scott amusingly observes :—'There have been instances of love tales being favourably received in England, when told under an umbrella, and in the middle of a shower.'

After this particular Sunday, to return from church together had, it seems grown 'into something like a custom before they met in society.' Time passed on, and when at last the acquaintance had ripened into something very much like love, Sir Walter's father took the matter in hand. Being aware that the young lady, who was very highly connected, had prospects of a fortune far above his son's, he conceived it his duty to give her parents warning that he had observed a degree of intimacy which, if allowed to go on might involve the parties in future pain and disappointment. But the matter was treated with indifference by the lady's father who thanked Mr Scott for his scrupulous attention, but added, that he believed he was mistaken. Hence this

interference on the part of his father, produced no change in Sir Walter Scott's relations with the object of his growing attachment. Without, however, entering further into this incident of the novelist's life it is sufficient to say that after he had, for several years, nourished the dream of an ultimate union with this lady, his hopes terminated in her being married to another. When the affair was known, some of those who knew Sir Walter Scott the best appear to have entertained very serious apprehensions as to the effect which the disappointment might have upon his feelings. That he was deeply in love there can be little doubt, for writing to a friend on the 23rd Aug. 1795, he says:—

'If you were surprised at reading the important billet, you may guess how agreeably I was at receiving it; for I had, to anticipate disappointment, struggled to repress every rising gleam of hope; and it would be very difficult to describe the mixed feelings her letter occasioned, which, *entre nous*, terminated in a very hearty fit of crying! I read over her epistle about ten times a day, and always with new admiration of her generosity and candour—and as often take shame for the mean suspicions which, after knowing her so long, I could listen to, while endeavouring to guess how she would conduct herself.'

'Talking of this story,' writes Lockhart, 'with Lord Kinedder, I once asked him whether Scott never made it the subject of verse at the period. Lord Kinedder replied, "Oh yes, he made many little stanzas about the lady, and he sometimes showed them to Cranstoun, Clerk and myself." He then took down a volume of the English Minstrelsy, and pointed out some lines, 'On a Violet,' about which he remarked, "I remember well, that when I first saw these, I told him they were his best; but he had touched them upwards:—

'"The violet in her greenwood bower
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower,
In glen or copse or forest dingle.

'Though fair her gems of azure hue
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining,
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue
More sweet through watery lustre shining.

'The summer sun that dew shall dry
Ere yet the sun be past its morrow,
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow."'

Again, in turning over a volume of MS. papers, Lockhart tells us that he found a copy of verses headed 'To Time—by a lady,' but from the initials on the back, he adds that he considers the authoress was no other than the object of his first passion. Hence their interest:—

'Friend of the wretch oppressed with grief,
Whose lenient hand, though slow, supplies
The balm that lends to care relief,
That wipes her tears—that checks her sighs!

'Tis thine the wounded soul to heal,
That hopeless bleeds from sorrow's smart,
From stern misfortune's shaft to steal
The barb that rankles in the heart.

'What though with thee the roses fly,
And jocund youth's gay reign is o'er;
Though dimm'd the lustre of the eye,
And hope's vain dreams I enchant no more.

'Yet in thy train come dove-eyed peace,
Indifference with her heart of snow;
At her cold couch, lo! sorrows cease,
No thorns beneath her roses grow.

'O haste to grant thy suppliant's prayer,
To me thy torpid calm impart,
Rend from my brow youth's garland fair,
But take the thorn that's in my heart.

'Ah! why do fabling poets tell,
That thy fleet wings outstrip the wind?
Why feign thy course of joy the knell,
And call thy slowest pace unkind?

'To me thy tedious feeble pace
Comes laden with the weight of years,
With sighs I view morn's blushing face,
And hail mild evening with my tears.'

Moreover, to this episode of this life there is clearly an allusion in the opening of the 12th

Chapter of the 'Peveril of the Peak'—written about a quarter of a century after his youthful disappointment, which commences thus:—

> Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
> Could ever hear by tale or history
> The course of true love never did run smooth.
>
> MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

'The celebrated passage which we have prefixed to this chapter, has, like most observations of the same author, its foundation in real experience. The period at which love is formed for the first time, and felt most strongly, is seldom that at which there is much prospect of its being brought to a happy issue. The state of artificial society opposes many complicated obstructions to easy marriages, and the chance is very great, that such obstacles prove insurmountable. In fine, there are few men, who do not look back in secret to some period of their youth, at which a sincere and early affection was repulsed, or betrayed, or became abortive from opposing circumstances. It is these little passages of secret history, which leave a fringe of romance in every bosom, scarce permitting us, even in the most busy or the most advanced period of life, to listen with total indifference to a tale of true love.'

Sir Walter Scott's second love was Charlotte

Carpenter, who at the time was under the guardianship of Lord Downshire, and was of a lively temperament. Writing to his mother he thus describes her:—'Without flying into raptures, for I must assure you that my judgment as well as my affections are consulted upon this occasion—without flying into raptures, then, I may safely assure you, that her temper is sweet and cheerful, her understanding good, and what I know will give you pleasure, her principles of religion very serious.' Such was the lady to whom Sir Walter Scott was engaged in the autumn of the year 1797; and subjoined are some of the letters which were written to him by her not long before their marriage. Some little delay was caused through getting Lord Downshire's consent, an allusion to which occurs in the following letter:—

Carlisle, Oct. 22, 1797.

Your last letter, my dear sir, contains a very fine train of *perhaps*, and of so many pretty conjectures, that it is not flattering you to say you excel in the art of tormenting yourself. As it happens, you are quite wrong in all your suppositions. I have been waiting for Lord D[ownshire]'s answer to your letter, to give a full answer to your very proper inquiries about my family. Miss

Nicolson says that when she did offer to give you some information you refused it,—and advises me now to wait for Lord D[ownshire]'s letter. Don't believe I have been idle; I have been writing very long letters to him, and all about you. How can you think that I will give an answer about the house until I hear from London? that is quite impossible; and I believe you are a little out of your senses to imagine I can be in Edinburgh before the twelfth of next month. O, my dear sir, no—you must not think of it this *great while.* I am much flattered by your mother's remembrance, present my respectful compliments to her. You don't mention your father in your last *anxious* letter. I hope he is better. . . . *Sans adieu.*

C. C.

The next letter was written three days later on, and shows that her lover was a little exacting in the matter of letter writing. It is also of additional interest from the history she gives of her parentage and early life.

Carlisle, October 25.

Indeed, Mr Scott, I am by no means pleased with all this writing. I have told you how much I dislike it, and yet you still persist in asking me to write, and that by return of post.

O! you are really quite out of your senses. I should not have indulged you in that whim of yours, had you not given me that hint that my silence gives an air of mystery. I have no reason that can detain me in acquainting you that my father and mother were French, of the name of Charpentier; he had a place under Government; their residence was at Lyons, where you would find on inquiries that they lived in good repute and in *very good style*. I had the misfortune of losing my father before I could know the value of such a parent. At his death we were left to the care of Lord D[ownshire], who was his very great friend; and very soon after, I had the affliction of losing my mother. Our taking the name of Carpenter was on my brother's going to India, to prevent any difficulties that might have occurred. I hope now you are pleased. Lord D[ownshire] could have given you every information, as he has been acquainted with all my family.

You say you almost love *him*; but until your *almost* comes to a *quite*, I cannot love *you*.

Before I conclude this famous epistle, I will give you a little hint—that is, not to put so many *must* in your letters—it is beginning *rather too soon*; and another thing is, that I take the liberty

not to mind them much, but I expect you mind me.

You *must* take care of yourself, you *must* think of me and believe me yours sincerely,

C. C.

The following note written the next day is an acknowledgment of a miniature which Sir Walter Scott sent Charlotte Carpenter. It is graceful and pretty;—

Carlisle, Oct. 26.

I have only a minute before the post goes, to assure you, my dear sir, of the welcome reception of the stranger. The very great likeness to a friend of mine will endear him to me; he shall be my constant companion, but I wish he could give me an answer to a thousand questions I have to make—one in particular, what reason have you for so many fears you express?

Have your friends changed? Pray let me know the truth—they perhaps, don't like me *being French.* Do write immediately—let it be in better spirits. Et croyez moi toujours votre sincere

C. C.

It seems that Sir Walter Scott's family were not altogether pleased with the fact of his lady-love being of French parentage, and made objections, as may be gathered from the next letter:—

October 31.

All your apprehensions about your friends make me very uneasy. At your father's age prejudices are not easily overcome—old people have, you know, so much wisdom and experience, that we must be guided by them.

If he has an objection on my being *French*, I excuse him with all my heart, as I don't love them myself.

Oh, how all these things plague me! When will it end? And to complete the matter you talk of going to the West Indies. I am certain your father and mother say you are a hot *heady* young man, quite mad, and I assure you I join with them; and I must believe, that when you have such an idea, you have then determined to think no more of me.

I begin to repent of having accepted your picture. I will send it *back again*, if you ever think again about the West Indies.

Your family then would *love me* very much—to forsake them for a *stranger*, a person who does not possess half the charms and good qualities that you *imagine*.

I think I hear your uncle calling you a hot heady young man—I am certain of it, and I am *generally right* in my conjectures. What does your sister say about it? I suspect that she thinks on the matter as I should do, with fears and anxieties for the happiness of her brother.

If it be proper, and you think it would be *acceptable* present my best compliments to your mother; and to my old acquaintance Captain Scott, I beg to be remembered.

This evening is the first ball—don't you wish to be of our party? I guess your answer—it would give me infinite pleasure. En attendant le plaisir de vous revoir, je suis toujours votre constante

CHARLOTTE.

The next letter is one of the most important in the love correspondence, because it contains the sanction of Lord Downshire to the marriage, whose letter—written on the same sheet—highly complimentary as it was to Sir Walter Scott, we also subjoin :—

Carlisle, Nov. 4.

Last night I received the enclosed for you from Lord Downshire. If it has your approba-

tion, I shall be very glad to see you as soon as will be convenient.

I have a thousand things to tell you, but let me beg of you not to think for sometime of a house. I am sure I can convince you of the propriety and prudence of waiting until your father will settle things more to your satisfaction, and until I have heard from my brother.

You *must* be of my way of thinking. Adieu.

C. C.

Lord Downshire's letter was thus—

The Castle, Hartford,
Oct. 29, 1797.

Sir,—I received the favour of your letter. It was so manly, honourable, candid, and so full of good sense, that I think Miss Carpenter's friends cannot in any way object to the union you propose. Its taking place, when or where, will depend upon herself, as I shall write to her by this night's post. Any provision that may be given to her by her brother, you will have settled upon her and her children: and I hope, with all my heart, that every earthly happiness may attend you both. I shall always be happy to hear it, and to subscribe myself your faithful friend and obedient humble servant,

Downshire.

In accordance with Charlotte Carpenter's wishes, Sir Walter Scott, obeyed her summons, and seems to have remained in Carlisle until the Court of Session met, 12th November, as appears from a letter she wrote two days later on.

Your letter never could have come in a more favourable moment. Anything you could have said would have been well received.

You surprise me much at the regret you express you had of leaving Carlisle. Indeed, I can't believe it was on my account, I was so uncommonly stupid.

I don't know what could be the matter with me, I was so very low, and felt really ill; it was even a trouble to speak. The settling of our little plans—all looked so much in earnest—that I began reflecting more seriously than I generally do, or *approve of*.

I don't think that very thoughtful people ever can be happy. As this is my maxim, adieu to all thoughts. I have made a determination of being pleased with everything, and with everybody at Edinburgh; a wise system for happiness is it not?

I enclose the lock. I had almost all my hair cut off. Miss Nicolson has taken some, which she sends to London to be made to something,

but this you are not to know of, as she intends to present it to you. . . . .

I am happy to hear of your father's being better pleased as to money matters; it will come at last, don't let that trifle disturb you. Adieu, Monsieur. J'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très *obeissante*

C. C.

In reply to a letter, which Sir Walter Scott apparently wrote her about his money affairs, she sent him the following:—

Carlisle, Nov. 27.

You have made me very *triste* all day. Pray never more complain of being poor. Are you not ten times richer than I am? Depend on yourself and your profession. I have no doubt you will rise very high, and be a *great rich man*, but we should look down to be contented with our lot. and banish all disagreeable thoughts. We shall do very well. I am very sorry to hear you have such a *bad head.*

I hope I shall nurse away all your aches. I think you write too much. When I am *mistress* I shall not allow it. How very angry I should be if you were to part with *Lenore.* Do you really believe I should think it an *unnecessary expense* where your health and pleasure can be

concerned? I have a better opinion of you, and I am very glad you don't give up the cavalry, as I love anything that is *stylish.*

Don't forget to find a stand for the old carriage, as I shall like to keep it, in case we should have to go any journey; it is so much more convenient than the post-chaises, and will do very well till we can keep *our carriage.*

What an idea of yours was that to mention where you wish to have your *bones laid!* If you were married, I should think you were tired of me. A very pretty compliment *before marriage.* I hope sincerely that I shall not live to see that day. If you always have those cheerful thoughts, how very pleasant and gay you must be.

Adieu, my dearest friend. Take care of yourself, if you love me, as I have *no wish* that you should visit that *beautiful* and *romantic* scene, the burying-place. Adieu, once more, and believe that you are loved very sincerely by

C. C.

Among further letters we may quote one dated Dec. 10:

If I could but really believe that my letter only gave you half the pleasure you express, I should almost think, my dearest Scott,

that I should get very fond of writing them for the pleasure to *indulge* you—that is saying a great deal.

I hope you are sensible of the compliment I pay you, and don't expect I shall *always* be so pretty behaved. You may depend on me, my dearest friend, for fixing as early a day as I possibly can; and if it happens to be not quite so soon as you wish, you must not be angry with me.

It is very unlucky you are such a bad housekeeper, as I am no better. I shall try. I hope to have very soon the pleasure of seeing you, and to tell you how much I love you; but I wish the first fortnight was over. With all my love, and those sort of pretty things—adieu.

CHARLOTTE.

P.S.—Etudiez votre Français? Remember you are to teach me Italian in return, but I shall be but a stupid scholar. *Aimez Charlotte.*

Once more—

Carlisle, Dec. 14.

. . . . .

I heard last night from my friends in London, and I shall certainly have the deed this week. I will send it to you directly; but not to

lose so much time as you have been reckoning, I will prevent any little delay that might happen by the post, by fixing already next Wednesday for your coming here, and on Thursday, the 21st —Oh! my dear Scott,—on that day I shall be yours for ever.

C. C.

P.S.—Arrange it so that we shall see none of your family the night of our arrival. I shall be so tired, and such a fright, I should not be seen to advantage.

JEREMY BENTHAM

1832

As a worker in the field of jurisprudence and ethics, the name of Jeremy Bentham will long remain famous and respected; for his influence on these sciences can scarcely be over-estimated. Although, from his occupations which were enormous, he was necessarily much absorbed in his pursuits; yet he possessed an unfailing flow of high spirits, and was, as John Stuart Mill once remarked, 'A boy to the last.' Indeed, at the age of eighty-two he wrote to his friend, Admiral Mordoinoff, 'I am alive; though turned of eighty, still in good health and spirits, codifying like any dragon.' Those who were fortunate enough to enjoy his society found in him one whose strong individuality made itself unconsciously felt by those around him. It is not surprising, therefore, that his presence at Bowood was an attraction which

Lord Shelburne fully appreciated and enjoyed. In spite of the fact that his brilliant intellect was often working out the most abstruse questions, yet he took part in the amusements of the house. He played the violin to the ladies' accompaniment on the harpsichord. In short, he thoroughly loved these days for they were full of pleasing surroundings for him. Thus, to quote his own words, 'I do what I please, and I have what I please. I ride and read with the son, walk with the dog, stroke the leopard, drive little Harry out in his coach, and play at chess and billiards with the ladies.' His life was a remarkable combination of work and pleasure, his labours being relieved by that relaxation which equally refreshed and stimulated him for further toil.

And yet these happy days—days which made a lasting impression on him—were destined to be tinged with pain; and to cast their shadow over his future life. Thrown into daily contact with ladies whose charms and graces were all that any man could desire, he imperceptibly lost his heart to one of these—he was in love.

It may be that he had over-estimated his own power of indifference to ladies' charms; but, whatever his high mental attainments, he fell under that seducing influence of love which captivates and enthralls oftentimes the most unlikely persons.

His life now was a romance, for his suit terminated unhappily for him. His offer of marriage was rejected. Thus the freedom of those Bowood days was at an end, and an eventful epoch in Jeremy Bentham's life had begun and closed.

However unsatisfactory the love-passage might be, yet Bentham appears to have made a long time afterwards in the year 1805, an offer of marriage. But this too was refused. Yet her answer, dignified and affectionate, did not drive the memory of her from his thoughts. Indeed his affection for this lady lingered in his spirit to the very end of his days. He often spoke of her with tears in his eyes; and even in his playfulness the introduction of her name, or any circumstance connected with her, would overpower him with melancholy. But it must be acknowledged that the lady's answer is full of sense and goodness; and, it has been rightly observed, that, as many of the fair sex as may ever have occasion to reject a man of genius, they cannot do better than take it as a model:—

Oct 10, 1805.

You do us but justice in believing that the renewal of friendly intercourse, after the lapse of so many years, afforded us the sincerest pleasure;

so great a pleasure indeed, that I am afraid the wish for its continuance (aided by an apprehension on my part, of yielding to what, for aught I knew, might be the suggestion of an extravagant female vanity) has misled our judgments, and caused a pang that I would have given the world to spare you—for we can never meet *but as friends*; but, this I did think that after a separation of sixteen years, we might have done with comfort and satisfaction to us both.

Alas! I have been painfully to myself as well as to you, mistaken; and I really never shall forgive myself, unless you acquit me of the least intended disturbance to your peace—unless you acknowledge that your own caution or your nervousness might naturally have led me to form that conclusion which was most agreeable to my wishes, as it flattered my hope of seeing you, and living henceforward in the habits of intimacy with you. This was foolish—I ought to have known you better; and had dear Mrs —— been within reach, she 'who looks before and after,' and quite into the hearts of men, would have been more clear-sighted. She never was cruel, but for a kind purpose; and we should have done better had we followed her example. Dear —— once compared me to a cat playing with a mouse. I was hurt and vexed at the reproach; though my conscience

acquitted me then, as it does now, of ever designing to give pain to any human being, much less to one whom I did, and ever shall respect and esteem, and gratefully remember.

Yet I am vexed now, because I think appearances are more against me. It is in your power, however, to make me easy, if you will instantly, without the waste of a single day, return to those occupations from which the world will hereafter derive benefit, and yourself renown. I have enough to answer for already in having interrupted your tranquillity (God knows how unintentionally), let me not be guilty of depriving mankind of your useful labours, of deadening the energy of such a mind as yours.

No! I have heard wise people say, and I hope it is true (though not to the honour of our sex), that single men achieve the greatest things. Pray, pray, rouse all the powers of your mind. You certainly have weapons to combat this idle passion, which other men, with vacant heads, have not. Let me, as a last request, entreat you to do it, and to devote all the time you can spare from your studies and your friends to Russell Square. There is not a man upon earth who loves you more affectionately than Mr Romilly—*I know he does;* and his wife's society, you acknowledge, is soothing to you.

Do this for my sake, and allow me to hope that, before I have quite reached my grand climacteric, I may again shake hands with you; it would be too painful to think it never could again be so. In the meantime, God bless you, and be assured of the unalterable good wishes and regards of the two spinsters. One word more, and I have done. Remember that we wrote to Mr Dumont, positively to know if you had made any stipulations against meeting *us*, whom you might very probably find at ——. I thought perhaps he might have guessed a truth which I was unwilling and ashamed to mention; but ignorant as he appeared to be of the state of things, it was no wonder he answered decidedly *not*, or in spite of ——'s urgent entreaties we should have sent an excuse that evening.

Heartily sorry I am now that we came; but the past cannot be recalled; only forgive it, and forget it if you can; and do not believe that, when you weep, I smile.

No, I weep too; nor when you are reading this letter will you be more nervous than I have been in writing it. Health and success attend your labours; and if I must be remembered, let it be as one most sincerely interested in all the good that befalls you. So once again, God bless you, and farewell!'

If it is any consolation to know that your letter has made me very unhappy, I can assure you, with truth, it has, and will do so for a long time to come, till I know that you are as comfortable as you were this time twelvemonth.

Anyhow, in some cases, as it has been often remarked, love is not so easily turned back. It is one of the mysteries of the softer passion that a man absorbed in severe studies, and wonderfully easy in his friendships should have preserved, through the drudgery of forty years, an ardour and a constancy seldom, indeed, found except in the sonnets of Petrarch, or the pages of a novel. This is, however, all the more to his credit, and one can only regret that such faithful and unchanging constancy was not rewarded by a brighter and more enjoyable termination. It cannot be doubted that the disappointment in a measure must have aggravated the natural and marked peculiarities of his character. Indeed, as has been observed, several events and circumstances scattered through his life show the chronic irritation it kept up. It probably, also, had a great deal to do towards turning him into the recluse,—a character which he so persistently assumed. To quote, however, the words of the *Edinburgh*

Review (1843, p. 485) in connection with this period of his life, the writer would have us remember how "the double fountain of pleasure and pain lie near each other in the human heart. We wish, therefore, to believe that this tender passage in the life of Bentham may have not made it, on the whole, a much less happy one; while the writings which he left behind him are, of themselves, conclusive evidence that he could not have led a much more busy one, even if the science of jurisprudence had been his only mistress. Of course, with this arrow at his heart, his visits at Bowood were at an end, and a painful embarrassment must have been introduced by it into his family intercourse with Lord Shelburne. Nevertheless, to the day of his death, he loved to dwell upon his pleasant days at Bowood, as the happiest of his life.

The following love letter was his last, as well it might be; but there is a kindly and touching mixture of tenderness and pride in his octogenarian farewell.

April 1827.

I am alive; more than two months advanced in my eightieth year—more lively than when you presented me, in ceremony, with the flower in the green lane. Since that day, not a single one

has passed (not to speak of nights) in which you have not engrossed more of my thoughts than I could have wished. Yet take me for all in all, I am more lively now than then—walking, though only for a few minutes, and for health's sake, more briskly than most young men you see—not unfrequently running.

In the enclosed scrap there are a few lines which I think you will read with pleasure.

I have still the pianoforte harpsichord, on which you played at Bowood. As an instrument, though no longer useful, it is still curious; as an article of furniture, not unhandsome; as a legacy, will you accept it?

I have a ring, with some of my snow-white hair in it, and my profile, which everybody says is like. At my death you will have such another. Should you come to want, it will be worth a good sovereign to you.

You will not I hope be ashamed of me.

The last letter which I received from Spanish America (it was in the present year), I was styled Legislador del Mundo, and petitioned for a Code of Laws. It was from the man to whom that charge was committed by the legislature of his country—Guatemala.

Every minute of my life has been long counted, and now I am plagued with remorse at the

minutes which I have suffered you to steal from me. In proportion as I am a friend of mankind (if such I am, as I endeavour to be), you, if within my reach, would be an enemy.

I have, for some years past, had a plan for building a harem in my garden, upon the Panopticon principle. The Premiership waits your acceptance; a few years hence, when I am a little more at leisure than at present, will be the time for executing it.

For these many years I have been invisible to all men (not to speak of women), but for special reason. I have lost absolutely all smell, as much as possible all taste, and swarm with petty infirmities. But it seems as if they ensured me against serious ones. I am, still am I gay, eminently so, and 'the cause of gaiety in other men.'

To read the counterpart of this in your hand, would make a most mischievous addition to my daily dose of bitter sweets—the above-mentioned mixture of pain and pleasure. Oh, what an old fool am I, after all, not to leave off, since I can, till the paper will hold no more. This you have done at sixty, and at half six miles' distance. What would you have done present, and at sixteen?* Embrace—though it is for me, as it is by you, she will not be severe, nor refuse her

lips, as to me she did her hand, at a time perhaps, not yet forgotten by her, any more than by me.

Lord Shelburne, it may be added, was very desirous that Jeremy Bentham should marry Lady Ashburton, and he pressed her suit on the ground that he would be an excellent guardian of her son. In response to this appeal, Bentham says, 'my surprise was considerable; gratitude not inferior. But,' he goes on to add, 'the offer was of the sort of those which may be received in any number, while at most only one at a time can be profited by.'

JAMES HOGG

1835

MARGARET PHILLIPS, who won the affections of the Ettrick Shepherd, seems to have possessed considerable attractions. Both in Edinburgh, and in her native Dumfriesshire, she had many admirers, and, as an acknowledged belle, wounded more hearts than she cared to tell. But this young lady turned a deaf ear to her many suitors, for she had met one whom she preferred before all others—James Hogg, the middle-aged struggling poet. The attraction was reciprocal, and gradually the attachment grew warmer. Ten years passed, but her image was ever before him, his poet's heart finding utterance in the following lines, of which she was the theme:—

MISCHIEVOUS WOMAN.

Could this old world have been contrived
To stand without mischievous woman,
How peaceful bodies might have lived,
Released from a' the ills sae common.

But since it is the waefu' case
That men maun hae this teasing crony
Why sic a sweet bewitching face?
Oh had she no been made sae bonnie!

I might hae roamed with cheerfu' mind,
Nae sin nor sorrow to betide me,
As careless as the wandering wind,
As happy as the lamb beside me;
I might have screwed my tunefu' pegs,
And caroll'd mountain airs so gaily,
Had we but wantit a' the Megs,
Wi' glassy e'en sae dark and wily.

I saw the danger, feared the dart,
The smile, the air, and a' sae taking,
Yet open laid my witless heart,
And gat the wound that keeps me waking.
My harp waves on the willow green,
O' wild witch notes it hasna ony
Sin' e'er I saw the pawky queen,
Sae sweet, sae wicked, and sae bonny.

Margaret remained true to her poet, and after waiting ten years, in April 1820, Hogg went to Dumfriesshire, and in the old mansion house of Mousewald Place, was married to his lady-love. The union was a singularly happy one, rendered perhaps more by the time they had waited for each other.

Of the letters that passed between them in the course of their engagement, we may quote extracts from one which he wrote to Margaret in 1812:

You blame me for jealousy, and for not writing seriously to you. What would you have me to say, Margaret? I am sure if this letter be any kinder than the last, you will not believe it. . . . But I will try to write two lines of truth for once, a thing rather uncommon with poets, you know. . . .

Then follows a declaration of love, the sincerity of which we could prove from this circumstance that 'when you were here there was no other person whom I liked better to see; and now when you are gone, there is no other person whom I would so fain see again I dare not say any more truth at present'

Later on in the same year he writes —

I have had some remarkably fine tours this year, both in the Highlands and in England, and fell acquainted with some very fine ladies, but as soon as I got from them, the black-eyed Nithsdale lassie was always uppermost in my mind.

. . . . .

Let me hear from you, the oftener the more welcome. I do not know what I would give to see you again.

J. H.

As is often the case with lovers, he seems, at times, to have doubted whether the marriage would ever take place. Thus, writing in the year 1818, he says :—'My mind is quite fixed and immovable. I might perhaps get a better wife and a richer wife, but I find I could not get one I like so well, or that would suit me better,—therefore I am determined that no failure or shortcoming shall take place on my part.

Yet I confess to you that ever since you took the resolution of going home to Nithsdale and leaving me, I have had a kind of prepossession that some obstacle would come in the way to prevent our union; and I expect that this obstacle will arise with your friends. I am so convinced of it that I have a jealousy of everyone of them.

In September 1819, he writes in much the same strain, expressing his doubts as to his acceptability to her friends :—I am vexed that you have never broken the ice for me, for I hoped to be at your side by this time; and not very sure that I shall not be so in a few days. . . . Would to Heaven that this mentioning of matters and making of treaties was over. My heart recoils from it more than from anything I ever set about.

Tell Walter [her brother] that I'll give him twenty guineas (a matter of some concern to a farmer when grain is so cheap), if he will just bring you over and set you down at my side, and make me free of all the rest of it, save taking you by the hand and making a short awkward bow to the minister, for as to pulling off gloves, you know I never wear any.

As the time of the marriage drew near, the letters of the lovers, writes Mrs Garden, 'treat of all the little details of business in a sensible unpoetic kind of way, down to his idea of what his bride should wear.' Accordingly he thus expressed his wishes:—

What is to be your bridal dress? I know what I would choose, but do not let that disarrange any of your measures. I would have you dressed in white muslin, with a white satin Highland bonnet, with white plumes and veil. I think this a highly becoming dress, and, moreover, a convenient one, for I see that married country ladies wear such bonnets at table, instead of caps, when visiting.

I must trust to you for a few gloves, favours, and such trifles, which I neither know nor care aught about.

Farewell, dearest Maggie, till I see you. Keep a good heart, the braes of Yarrow will soon be very wildly bonny, and everyone here is wearying to see you; but scarcely one yet believes you are coming.

Writing in November he tells her that he perfectly agrees with her in consulting her father, and says:—

. . . . . .

I am far from thinking you did wrong in what you communicated to your father. A parent is always a sure confidant. Indeed, I have always thought that a young lady, who receives the addresses of a lover out of her father's knowledge, or without his approbation, had better not receive them at all. . . . I could not cherish a hope of losing you, but some things that you said to me set me a thinking, and that very seriously, and I am not yet convinced of the prudence of our marriage, considering my years and the uncertain state in which I hang as it were between poverty and riches.

For God's sake consult further with your father, for I have no one to consult on the subject, and have got some very urgent remonstrances against you. Indeed, your father is the only

man whom I would consult, knowing that he has your happiness at heart, and would, I am sure, advise what he judges best. I have very much need of you just now, for my housekeeper, a valuable, honest woman, refuses to stay.

From the next letter, August 1819, it would seem that a quarrel had taken place, for Hogg writes from Edinburgh in a very hot-tempered manner:

Your anxiously looked for letter has given me but little satisfaction. I knew what it would be when you got home among your friends, and often foretold you of it. And now I see I am too right. The mighty objection that you dwell upon must be obvious to everyone, and it would not have been fair to the woman of my heart not to have given a true picture of my present circumstances and future prospects. If it had not been for paying off old debts with interest—and building a new cottage, I would have had a good deal of money before my hand; as it is, I have none.

It is all a pretence your saying that my letter bore marks of my having changed my mind. As far as I remember, it was as affectionate a letter

as ever was written. Certain I am it was meant to be so.

My mind is made up, but my heart will not suffer any insult; and if I see the least symptom of dislike among your friends, and that they are influencing you against me, I am off in a moment. I think too much of myself to truckle or cringe to man that is born of woman, or to woman either. . . . Your objection cannot be removed in a day nor a year. But I find that I am in bad humour to-day, and ought not to have written. It is your letter that has made me so.

Towards the close of the year he writes from Ettrick.

I see your letter is of an old date, and yet it is several days since I got it; but at this season I am quite secluded almost from the possibility of communication with this world; it being only by chance that I got my letters at all. . . . That night before I got your letter, which was on Saturday last, I had such a dream of distress as I never experienced. It was all about your family, and terminated at an old church among graves and gravestones, and strangers.

But why frighten I my dearest Margaret by the vagaries of such a visionary as I am; only the

circumstance has made me uneasy and I cannot keep it.

It was never in view of receiving a fortune with you that induced me to pay my addresses to you, Margaret. On the contrary, you know that I declined an independent fortune that was mine for the taking for your sake, and that it was pure affection made me proffer you my hand. I had no doubt that your father had the same affection for you that he has for the rest of his family, and judging from my own feelings, perhaps I thought he might have more. Whatever portion, therefore, he thinks proper to give or bequeath to you, with that I have made up my mind to be satisfied, and grateful both to him and to his memory. But having no fortune of my own to bestow on you, I would scorn to enter into conditions for the woman I loved.

One of his love-letters, through the inadvertence of his future father-in-law, was opened. An act which he wrongly misconstrued, as the next letter shows :—

March, 14, 1820.

I am not going to write any more letters to you; for all that I write is meant only for your private

life. I sent a letter to Dumfries fair, which three of my friends in company delivered to your father. Without any ceremony he put on his spectacles, set his back to the wall, broke open my letter, and read it from end to end—now, I do not care much for this, as I daresay I would not make any proposals to his daughter that were dishonourable ; but [done], as it was, before my neighbours, I could not help taking it as a manifest insult.

But the incident was speedily forgotten, as the marriage took place soon afterwards, when the father-in-law seems to have been on the best terms with him.

JOHN CONSTABLE

1837

With Mary Bicknell, Constable became first acquainted when she was a child at Bergbolt in 1800. Her friends were opposed to their union, her father might have yielded but for fear of excluding his daughter's name from the will of her grandfather who was very rich. As it was, the lovers, says Leslie who has written the memoirs of his friend, were doomed for five years to suffer all the wearing anxieties of hope deferred. The following letter to Constable from Miss Bicknell, who was from home when she wrote it, will speak for itself, and commend its own cool philosophy.

Spring Grove,
November 4, 1811.

My dear Sir,—I have just received my father's letter. It is precisely such a one as I

expected, reasonable and kind: his only objection would be on the score of that necessary evil money. What can we do? I wish I had it, but wishes are vain: we must be wise, and leave off a correspondence that is not calculated to make us think less of each other. We have many painful trials required of us in this life, and we must learn to bear them with resignation. You will still be my friend, and I will be yours; then as such let me advise you to go into Suffolk, you cannot fail to be better there. I have written to papa, though I do not in conscience think that he can retract anything he has said, if so, I had better not write to you any more, at least till I can coin. We should both of us be bad subjects for poverty, should we not? Even painting would go on badly, it could hardly survive in domestic worry.

Constable abated no jot of heart or hope notwithstanding this chilly and prudential epistle.

'Be assured,' he writes to her with a lover's zeal, 'we have only to consider our union as an event that must happen, and we shall yet be happy.'

East Bergholt, June 22, 1812.

From the window where I am now writing, I

see all these sweet fields where we have passed so many happy hours together. . . . How delighted I am that you are fond of Cowper! But how could it be otherwise? for he is the poet of religion and nature. I think the world much indebted to Mr Hayley. . . .

On July 22, after something about the study of landscape 'but I am writing this nonsense with a sad heart, when I think what would be my happiness could I have this enjoyment with you. Then, indeed, would my mind be calm to contemplate the endless beauties of this happy country.'

To letters of this nature the ever prudent Miss Bicknell replied thus, after the most approved copy-book fashion:

By a sedulous attention to your profession you will very much help to bestow calm on my mind. . . . You will allow others to outstrip you, and then perhaps blame me. Exert yourself while it is yet in your power, the path of duty is alone the path of happiness. . . . Believe me I shall feel a more lasting pleasure in knowing that you are improving your time, than I should

do while you were on a stolen march with me round the Park. Still I am not heroine enough to say, wish, or mean that we should never meet. I know that to be impossible. But then, let us resolve it shall be but seldom; not as inclination, but as prudence shall dictate. Farewell, dearest John—may every blessing attend you, and in the interest I feel in your welfare, forgive the advice I have given you, who, I am sure are better qualified to admonish me. Resolution is I think what we now stand most in need of, to refrain for a time, for our mutual good, from the society of each other.

Writing to his 'dear Maria,' on September 18, 1814, he says, following apparently the lady's lead. 'I hope on my return to London to have the great happiness of seeing you much oftener than I have hitherto done. I believe we can do nothing worse than indulge in useless sensibility, but I can hardly tell you what I feel at the sight from the window at which I am writing of the fields in which we have so often walked. A calm autumnal setting sun is glowing in the gardens of the rectory and on those fields where some of the happiest hours of my life have been passed.'

Feb. 13, 1816.

I trust, my dearest love, that you have allowed yourself to be made as little unhappy as possible by what has been lately passing* in your house. You have always been so kind as to believe that my affection for you was never alloyed by worldly motives. I now more than ever repeat it, and I assure you that nothing can be done by any part of your family that shall ever make any alteration in me towards you. . . . Our business is now more than ever with ourselves. . . . After this, my dearest Maria, I have nothing more to say than the sooner we are married the better, and from this time I for my part shall cease to listen to any arguments the other way from any quarter.

On July 30, 1816, the lady, having been recommended a journey to Wales for her health's sake, writes, 'I think you may safely trust to my discretion, and then my dear John shall find me ready, if it is his decided wish, for another and far pleasanter journey.'

On the 15th of September, she says, 'Papa is averse to everything I propose. If you please

* A little disagreement with her grandfather which would probably affect her fortune. 'We have been making ourselves happy over a barrel of gunpowder,' writes Constable with reference to this irascible old gentleman.

you may write to him; it will do neither good nor harm. I hope we are not going to do a very foolish thing. . . . Once more, and for the last time! it is not too late to follow Papa's advice, and *wait*. Notwithstanding all I have been writing, whatever you deem best I do. . . . This enchanting weather gives me spirits.'

They were married on the 2nd of October 1816.

GEORGE BRYAN BRUMMELL

1840

Captain Jesse has written the life of this gentleman; but it is to Moore that we must be grateful for the record that the Prince Regent 'began to blubber when told that Brummell did not like the cut of his coat.'

'The organ of love,' says Captain Jesse, 'in the cranium of Beau Brummell was only faintly developed.' The temperament of the Beau, or the Buck as he was called at Eton and Oriel, was elephantial. Yet he never attained any degree of intimacy with a pretty woman of rank without making her an offer—not with any idea of being accepted, but because he thought it a matter of compliment. As this custom was understood, his offer was seldom taken seriously, but even when all things were in readiness, the marriage was a failure. On one of such occasions he was asked,

Why. 'What could I do, my dear fellow,' he replied, 'but cut the connexion? I discovered that Lady Mary actually ate cabbage.'

Here is one of his appeals, the pathetic appeals that he addressed to single women—in warm weather, for his heart seldom thawed to this extent before the middle of June. He could write hundreds of billets doux by his fire-side, but he was not the man to shiver near his lady love's *porte cochère* in expectation of a note, before May was out.

Rue Royale, Wednesday.

Yesterday morning I was subdued almost to insanity, but your note in the evening restored me to peace and equanimity, and as if I had been redeemed from earthly purgatory, placed me in heaven.

Thank you, thank you, dearest of beings; how can I retribute all this benevolent open-heartedness, the delightful proof and avowal of my not being indifferent to you?

I cannot, by inanimate words represent the excess of my feelings towards you; take them with indulgent admission and forbearance, the simple boon and sacred pledge of my heart's deepest affections for you; they are rooted in my very soul and existence; they will never deviate; they will never die away.

By the glimering light that was remaining I perceived something in white at your *porte cochère*. It was evident that I was recognised, and the figure advanced with your *billet*. In an instant I seized the hand of your faithful and intelligent messenger, compressed it forcibly, and had she been as forbidding as the old Dowager Duchess of —— I should have saluted her, if I had not fancied at the instant that I heard some one coming up the street. We parted and I returned to my solitary chamber. There I lacerated the letter with impatience, and then the light of love and joy and the refreshing breath of evening stole through the open window over my entranced senses. After that I sought another stroll on the ramparts, and again returned home contented with you, with myself and with the world.

'I slept the slumbers of a saint forgiven,
And mild as opening dreams of promised heaven.'

I have known few that could equal, none that could excel you; yet they possessed not your charm of countenance, your form, your heart, in my estimation.

Certainly they did not possess that unaffected and fervent homage, which in my constant memory,—in my heart's life blood,—and in my

devoted soul I bear to you.—Ever most affectionately yours,

GEORGE BRUMMELL.

MY DEAR LADY JANE,—With the miniature it seems I am not to be trusted even for two pitiful hours; my own memory must be then my only disconsolate expedient to obtain a resemblance . . .* But we know that you are an angel visiting these sublunary spheres, and therefore your first quality should be that of mercy; yet you are sometimes wayward and volatile in your seraphic disposition—though you have no wings, still you have weapons; and these are resentment and estrangement from me. With sentiments of the deepest compunction, I am always—Your miserable slave,

GEORGE BRUMMELL.

The Lady Jane—Harley Street.

DEAR MISS——. When I wrote to you a century ago in plaintive strains, and with 'all Hackman's sorrows and all Werter's woes' you told me with pen dipped in oblivion's ink from Lethe's stream that I must desist from my vagaries, because I was trespassing on conse-

* Apologies for retaining one of her gloves.

crated ground; but you offered me instead your *friendship* as a relic—by way of a bone to pick among all my refined and elegant sensibilities.

Well, I struggled hard to bring myself to this meagre abnegation, and my efforts promised to be propitious. I kissed the rod, cherished the relic, and enveloped myself in austerity and sackcloth.

I then, by way of initiating myself to penance inscribed you a missive in appropriate terms of mortification, presuming too, that it was the privilege, if not the duty, of my vocation to mortify you also, as a votary with a little congenial castigation.

I dare say I wrote to you in a most absurd and recriminating manner, for I was excited by the pious enthusiasm of my recent apostasy; and I was anxious to impress upon your more favourable opinion the exemplary and salutary progress I had made in my new school. You are, it seems, displeased at it, though my heresy from my first delightful path was your own work. I know not now where to turn for another belief.

I will tell you the truth in plain unmystical language, for I have not yet learnt to renounce *that*. I was irritated because I thought you had cut me dead in the morning, and when I was

tête-à-tête with my solitary lamp in the evening, a thousand threatening phantoms assailed me.

I imagined that you had abandoned me; in short, a cohort of blue devils got the better of me, and I am now all compunction and anguish.

Pray be once more an amiable and compassionate being, and do not contract your lovely eyebrows any more (I wish to Heaven I could see them at this instant) in sullenness at all my numberless incongruities and sins. Be the same Samaritan saint you have already been to me; you shall never more repent it.

Whatever I may have said in a frenical (*sic*) moment of exasperation was *unsaid* and *unthought* an hour afterwards, when I sought my couch, and proffered my honest prayers for forgiveness from above, and profanely from you who are upon earth.

I am more than conscious of all my derelictions —of all my faults, but indeed they shall be in future corrected, if you are still a friend to me. I had vaunted in the vanity of my chivalrous spirit that I had at length proved sure in myself; but it was empty ostentation, for I find that I cannot exist but in amity with you.—Your unfortunate supplicant,

GEORGE BRUMMELL.

The end of Brummell, as the full reader is of course aware, was unhappy. Gambling losses forced the Beau to leave England. He went to Calais, and there, after a while, recommenced card-playing.

In 1835, his creditors closed round him and haled him before the judgment seat and cast him into prison. In 1837, his wit failed him, more or less. His dress and habits of life once so punctilious and elegant became, in the meeting of extremes, careless and loathsome. In 1840, in the asylum of Bon Sauveur, Caen, he died.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

1843

It was Southey's wish that his correspondence with Caroline Bowles at a fitting time should see the light. 'As for my letters,' he wrote (December 18, 1829), 'I will deposit them with yours (for I have preserved every line that I ever received from you). There is nothing in them which may not be seen by men and angels, and though written, as their utter carelessness and unreserve may show, without the slightest reference to any other eyes than those to which they were addressed, I shall not be unwilling to think that when time has consecrated both our memories (which it will do), this correspondence may see the light.

'Our earthly life, dear Caroline, lasts longer than in the hearts of those we love; it endures in the hearts of those whom we have never known,

and who learn to love us after our work on earth is done. They who live on earth, in their good works continue to make friends there as long as their works survive; and it may be one of the pleasures of another state to meet those friends when they seek us in Heaven.

'I often feel that this will and must be so when on reading a good old book my heart yearns towards the author.'

Caroline Bowles's answer is written in a like spirit:—

I shall now keep those treasured letters while I live, with a clear conscience, and perhaps you may have created in my heart a feeling which before (as relating to myself) had no existence there—a degree of interest in something of me that shall survive on earth—I mean our correspondence. All my share in it will find indulgence for your sake.

Among the early letters which Caroline Bowles addressed to Southey, we may quote the following:—

Buckland, June 3rd, 1818.

No, indeed, you have not guessed how I have

thought and felt respecting the length of time which has elapsed since I had the boldness to address you. I was aware of the probability that it would be long before my packet reached you; and I felt assured that when you did receive it, you would honour me with a reply, and a gentle one. . . I entirely agree with you, we need not create to ourselves fictitious griefs, life has too many real sorrows; but the mind recently afflicted colours everything with its own sadness. I wrote under such impressions, oppressed besides by the langour of a very trying nervous disorder. These circumstances may excuse me.

Once, everything in life glowed with the brightness of my own feelings, but it was fit the painted vapour should be dispelled. Earth had too much of my affection, and when time has mellowed those shades of calamity, I may probably again regain some feelings of tempered enjoyment. Your letter has imparted to me the most pleasurable I have known for many a day. Such a heart as yours will not be insensible to the assurance. How much I indeed wish you were near enough for me to see and converse with you. Such a neighbourhood would give a new interest to my existence; but I live in a desert, of which, however, my little house is still the green valley.

If I indulge longer in such digression, I shall

forget how little I am authorized to weary your patience; forgive me for having intruded on it so long, and believe me,

Yours most gratefully,

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY

Buckland, October 18, 1823.

The first feeling that with me and with most persons, I should think, succeeds the painful one parting from a friend is an impatient inclina- to write to him, and if I had obeyed that impulse you would have heard from me from Ambleside. But sometimes (not always) sober afterthought restrains these foolish impulses of mine, and so you were deprived of the very interesting information that I was sitting all alone in a dull inn room, regretting Keswick with all my heart, and prevented by an incessant pouring rain from exploring, as I had hoped, some of the lovely scenery about Rydal and Grasmere. . . .

I have been amongst you to-day, enjoying with redoubled zest what I once thought nothing could increase my delight in, the introduction to your 'Poets' Pilgrimage.' How often I shall be in spirit in the midst of you, and revisiting

with you some of those enchanting spots to which you were my conductor. To each and every member of your happy circle I send greetings warm and grateful; in particular, pray offer my best regards and thanks to Mrs Southey. . .

. Pray convey a few more remembrances from me—to the Ladies of the Lakes, if they are still sojourning amongst you. Amongst a thousand things I should like to learn of you—alas! unteachable things—is the art of saying much in a few words; but I suppose a woman's ink is like her volubility—

'A stream that murmuring flows, and flows for ever.'

Hardly a drop of rain have I seen since I left Westmoreland. I had almost said 'how provoking.' Selfish creature that I am—not dissatisfied, however—for I saw and enjoyed much, very much; and had I not done so, to have become acquainted with your family, and more thoroughly with yourself, would have made me ample amends; may I not say, to have acquired the privilege of calling you friend?

Most gratefully and truly yours,

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

To Robert Southey.

Buckland, August 29, 1824.

You are almost the only living creature in whom I have never found myself mistaken or disappointed, and you do not shun me because I am in sorrow, as is the world's way, and as I have bitterly experienced in times past from some who had sought and caressed me in my happier days.

Well, one friend of all weathers would compensate for the unkindness of fifty such worlds; and if I have found you late, it is not too late, for as you say, we shall meet 'surely and lastingly hereafter.'

God grant we may here, and I do not despair of it, because, though hopeless of the physical regeneration you speak of, mine is not a disease that very quickly accomplishes its work. . . . God bless you, dear friend, bless and preserve you.

Caroline A. Bowles.

P.S.—You wrote to me on your birthday. I shall not forget that day if I live till its next anniversary. If I live till the 6th of next December, I shall then complete my thirty-seventh or thirty-eighth year—I am not certain which. . . . The next 6th of December will be

doubly a wintry day to me, for it will be the first in my remembrance that will bring with it no tribute of affection. My dear *bonne*, according to the custom of her country, used always to buy me a nosegay on that morning; yes, flowers even on that wintry day, and I believe if we had dwelt on the Great St. Bernard, she would have contrived to find some among its eternal snows. No voice, no kiss, no flowers now. It will be all winter.

To Robert Southey.

Buckland, November 13, 1824.

Pray give me some token that you are on this side Heaven, dear friend! I am rather disquieted at your long silence; the more so, as when you wrote last, Cuthbert was only then recovering from a serious illness. Tell me you and all yours are well, and then I shall have no further uneasiness than the fear that you should think me a little importunate. But you must remember that I live out of myself and my solitary home, and so entirely in those I love and all that concerns them, that I am perhaps more excusable for taking alarm than those who are surrounded by friends and families; and all my social intercourse is epistolary. . . .

Farewell, and God bless you, dear friend.

Caroline A. Bowles.



CAROLINE BOWLES.

To Caroline Bowles.

Keswick, February 22, 1825.

You have sent me one of the things in the world which I most wished to possess, and yet you say I shall not thank you for it.* Likeness enough there is; I can perceive so much as to fancy it more. As to age, you are almost young enough to be my daughter, and for the other character which you give yourself, would to Heaven there was as little ground for calling yourself sick.

No, you may be assured that I will not send that drawing to Somerset House, not if they would give me the finest picture that ever was exhibited there in exchange for it. . . . In my last letter, I ought to have said, that should you be going anywhere for change of air or to drink the waters at the time of my movement, wherever that may be, I will take that place instead of Buckland in my course.

So you are not to make any derangement in your plans on my account. See you I will, and the thought of seeing you reconciles me more than anything else that I look on to in leaving home.

Dear Caroline, God bless you.

Robert Southey.

* In a letter of February 17, accompanying a drawing which included

To Robert Southey.

Buckland, November 15, 1827.

Never since you called me 'friend' has your mind been of such long duration, and I am growing too anxious to wait its voluntary termination. If I find only want of time and leisure have prevented you from writing, I shall be heartily ashamed of this importunity, and will promise to scold myself; but do not you be angry with me, for indeed I am anxious.

My last to you was a strange scrawl, but I had just been half-choked with salt water, and quite killed with fright, in my passage across from Southampton to Hythe. I was thinking all the way over, when the waves gave me breathing time, 'now, if this were to fetch Mr Southey from Southampton, (you know I took you there) it would be worth encountering.' . . .

God bless you, my dear friend. If you are too much engrossed to write to me, just say so in one line (no bull that!), and that you are well, and that will content me, for I am not very, very, very unreasonable.

Caroline A. Bowles.

her own figure, Miss Bowles writes: 'The drawing of a little group very fine, very scientific as you will see, but two of the figures are faithful portraits, for the third—one can't make such a little thing look sick, old and ugly-like, that is. Don't send it to Somerset House.'

To Caroline Bowles.

Cats' Eden, Keswick, January 1, 1829.

If there were sky-packets to the other world, dear Caroline, as perhaps there would have been if Sin and Death had not entered into this, and may be hereafter when the victory over them shall be completed; if there were such packets, I would not wish you many happy returns of a new year, for I should rather take counsel with you about making a party, and setting off for one of those lovely stars which one can hardly look at without fancying that in some of them there will be a resting place for us.

But things being as they are, I pray God to give you better health, fewer vexations, more comforts, and life long enough to enjoy the fruits of the reputation you deserve, and cannot fail to obtain.

You have sent me a precious drawing and a pleasant letter. Your letters indeed are always pleasant except when they tell me that you have been suffering sickness, molestation, or such mishap as this late one.* which might have been so much more serious in its consequences. . . .

Dear friend, God bless you.

Robert Southey.

* The sinking of a wall of her house.

To Caroline Bowles.

Keswick, February 15, 1829.

I cannot express to you with what emotions I read your last letter, nor will I endeavour to do it. My heart also is full of recollections like yours—'last words, last looks'—for which there is no Lethe in this world. If there were, methinks I would go a long pilgrimage to drink of it, but not if it were to wash away more than I wished to part with. . . . God bless you.

Robert Southey.

To Caroline Bowles.

Could I look forward to a distant day
With hope of building some elaborate lay,
Then would I wait till worthier strains of mine
Might wear inscribed thy name, O Caroline;
For I would, while my voice is heard on earth,
Bear witness to thy genius and thy worth.

But we have late been taught to feel with fear
How frail the tenure of existence here;
What unforeseen calamities present,
Alas how oft! the best resolved intent,
And therefore this poor volume I address
To thee my dear friend, and sister Poetess.

To Caroline Bowles.

Keswick, April 14, 1833.

Many years it cannot be, in the course of

nature, before we shall meet in a better world, even were we both to live out the full term of ordinary life. You have seen Quarles' Hieroglyphics of the life of man, a candle graduated from the age of ten, by tens, to fourscore. Mine has just burnt down to three-score, and if I live till the 12th August next I shall enter upon my sixtieth year. Sixteen years we have known each other, and nothing can be more unlikely than that our earthly intercourse shall be prolonged to us many years more.

Which ever goes first will be spared a poignant feeling here, and have the joy of bidding the other welcome to our new country. Meanwhile every day brings us nearer to it, and whatever we do to render ourselves useful here by our writings will be rendering ourselves fitter for the change.

Your picture will be prized as a treasure, and you may be assured that it will have a place of honour. A treasure it will be now, and a great one hereafter, to those who can attach no such feeling to it as I shall do. . . . Dear Caroline, God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Later on he writes again in the same strain:—

To Caroline Bowles

Keswick, August 4, 1833.

Next week, if I live so long, I enter upon my sixtieth year. Sixteen have elapsed since we became known to each other. Before another such term has run out, we may meet in eternity; in the ordinary course of nature my departure is not likely to be deferred so long. It is but a little way to look on; and I look to it as I used to do in my youth to the end of a long day's walk—not with the feeling of one who is weary of his labours, but with a willingness to be at rest; and the satisfaction of knowing assuredly that there will be that rest for me. . . .

The portrait has not yet arrived. From a fortnight to three weeks is the usual time upon the road; so it may be looked for every carrier's day till it arrives, and we have four in the week.

. . . . . .

Monday 5th—The portrait has just arrived safely. It is a delightful picture as well as a very good likeness.

Thank you, dear Caroline,—thank you, thank you. . . . God bless you, dear friend. Let me hear of you, not that I may think the less, but the less anxiously.

Robert Southey.

To Robert Southey

Buckland, October 21, 1833.

Dear friend, if anything could have made *me* dance for joy it would have been the sight of your handwriting, for I had been sorely troubled by your silence, though always endeavouring to reason myself into a belief of the true cause.

But you know it is said of women that we reason more with our hearts than our heads, and the former organ is a bad casuist, and I (at my best of times not among the wisest of women), have of late years fallen into the bad and sinful habit of expecting evil. It was not my early nature to do so, but painful experience has engrafted it on natural weakness.

This I must add, however, with vehement sincerity, that I would rather endure a week's anxiety than rob you of an hour's, *nay half-an*-hour's exercise; *I do not say of five minutes;* time enough *par parenthèse* to say '*I am well,*' and fold up the missive.

Will you behave better for the future? I mean to yourself and Providence, which has so far, thank God for it, kept you in health and safety. . . . Yes, dear friend, but for memory and hope this would be a poor life truly. If you please, you shall introduce me to Sir Philip

Sydney and his sister, 'Pembroke's mother,' as for Queen Elizabeth, to confess the truth, I should be as little ambitious of her acquaintance and patronage in another world (where the climate of her Court may be too warm for comfort), as I should have been of a place in her household here. . . .

God bless you, dear friend.

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Buckland, December 14, 1833.

Your letters, dear friend, do me more good than all my physicians, my other physicians, prescribe for me; they talk of hope, but your letters breathe hope, hope and encouragement even as to the things of this world, so connected with higher hopes and more blessed assurances, that while the effect of such mental communion with you lasts, I am almost all I ought to be—not cast down by temporal suffering and trusting in perfect peace on the promises that cannot fail.

We are approaching a new year, dear friend. . . . May it bring with it blessings to you and yours, blessings in God's own way of His good choosing! Neither you nor I, were the choice left to us, would dare make it for ourselves.



SOUTHEY

Farewell for this year. It will be three years this Christmas since we last saw each other face to face, but I take delight in the assurance that our friendship is not of that nature which depends on, or even needs, the refreshing of personal intercourse; the enjoyment of it, however, would be such happiness that, to say the truth, I am most resigned to the deprivation when not permitting myself to dwell upon it.

Once more farewell, dear friend, and God bless you.

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Buckland, February 14, 1834

Have I then really and truly a fair hope of seeing you here again, and before this year hastens to a close. For a long season all anticipation of earthly events has been to me so joyless, to say the least, that a gleam of sunshine dazzles me, and I cannot look steadily forward; but it shines through the closed lids, and I am glad, though I dare not be sanguine, for alas! it is now possible I might have to say, 'Do not come.' I should do so for your sake, if I was suffering so much as I have suffered, for you read my silence right. I should have been eager to tell you I was

better, and I can now gratefully say that I am so. . . .

God bless you, dear friend.

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Buckland, August 25, 1835.

I repented, for the thousandth time, of my impatience, when your first letter of the 4th arrived, almost immediately after my persecuting one was despatched; and yet I will make no further excuse than to plead the infirmity of my nature and the intensity of my anxious feelings for you and yours under present circumstances.

I bless God that you are supported, as you are assuredly, by Himself. What arm but His could bear you up under the crushing weight you are appointed to bear. But for His sake do not think of sending from you your dear, filial comforters. You say you sometimes think you should be as well without them; I cannot believe it for a moment. It would be a tempting of Providence to isolate yourself so unnaturally. . . .

I fear I must not entertain any hope of seeing you again this autumn. In truth, I had scarcely dared to encourage so cheering an expectation. If the cause of prevention were a happy one for

yourself, my regret, being wholly selfish, would be far other than it is now.

I think that my solitary, isolated life has disposed and led me to identify my feelings with those of absent friends—be they joyous or sorrowful—more than a continued course of social intercourse could have done. I know not whether this is a common characteristic, but in my case it is often a happy one, for good tidings of dear friends almost always charms away my melancholy mood.

To be sure, there is the reverse, as I prove to you sometimes when anxious thoughts impel me to break wise resolves and write, when I had better wait patiently. Now, farewell, dear friend, and God bless you.

CAROLINE A. BOWLES.

THOMAS HOOD

1845

His acquaintanceship with John Hamilton Reynolds, when assisting him in the editorship of the *London Magazine*, was at least so far happy that it introduced Hood to his future wife, Reynolds' sister. She has been described as a true woman, pre-eminent for all qualities of fitness, who made the sunshine of years in a life which had much more than the ordinary share of shadow. She was a woman of cultivated mind, and her letters are full of good sense, with frequent overflows of humour. She is said, also, to have been one of the sweetest tempers of the world, and was ever ready to join in a laugh, even although the joke went against herself.

The marriage took place on the 5th of May, in the year 1824, and in spite of sickness and sorrow, the union was a purely happy one; for, despite affliction, all that was wifely and womanly

strove to make one spot on earth green and pleasant below. Among some of the very tender letters he addressed to his wife may be quoted one dated from Coblenz, March 13th [1835]—

At last, my own dearest and best, I sit down to write to you, and I fear you have been looking anxiously for news from me. . . I am writing but a business letter, and you must give me credit, my own dearest, for everything else, as I wish to devote all the space I can to describing what will be for your comfort. . . . I have been like the wandering Jew. How my thoughts and wishes fly over the vine-covered hills to meet yours; my love set towards you like the mighty current of the great Rhine itself, and will brook no impediments.

I grudge the common-place I have been obliged to write; every sentence should claim you, as my own dear wife, the pride of my youth, the joy of my manhood, the hope of all my after days. Twice has the shadow of death come between us, but our hearts are preserved to throb against each other. I am content for your sake to wait the good time when you may safely undertake the voyage, and do not let your heart run away with your head.

. . . I forgot to say at Coblenz the men fre-

quent the Casinos, and the women make evening parties of their own, but I do not mean to give up my old domestic habits.

We shall set an example of fireside felicity, if that can be said of a stove, for we have no grates here—the more's the pity. God bless you. Ever—your own

T. H.

Another letter dated from the same locality is thus—

My own dearest and best Love, . . I do hope you will soon be able to come, and in the meantime I will do everything I can think of to facilitate your progress. . . .

I saw a vision of you, dearest, to-day, and felt you leaning on me, and looking over the Moselle at the blue mountains and vineyards. I long but to get to work with you and the pigeon pair by my side, and then I shall not sigh for the past. . . Get yourselves strong, there is still a happy future; fix your eyes forward on our meeting, my best and dearest.

Our little home, though homely, will be happy for us, and we do not bid England a very long good-night. Good-night, too, my dearest wife, my pride and comfort.

And from these mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft much blessing unto thee,
As with a sigh I deem thou now might'st be to me—

In the following letter, written just after his wife left to go on a journey, there is an exceedingly natural touch, showing how deep was his love for her—how restless for her return.

MY OWN DEAREST AND BEST,—We parted manfully and womanfully as we ought. I drank only half a bottle of the Rhine wine, and only the half of that, ere I fell asleep on the sofa, which lasted two hours. It was the reaction, for your going tired me more than I cared to show. Then I drank the other half, and as that did not do, I went and retraced our walk in the park, and sat down in *the same seat*, and felt happier and better. Have you not a romantic old husband?

A further illustration of the high regard he had for his wife may be gathered form the subjoined extract in which he tells her:—I never was anything, dearest, till I knew you; and I have been a better, happier, and more prosperous man ever since. Lay by that truth in sweet lavender, sweetest, and remind me of it when I

fail. I am writing warmly and fondly, but not without good cause. First, your own affectionate letter, lately received, next, the remembrances of our dear children; then a delicious impulse to pour out the overflowings of my heart into yours; and last, not least, the knowledge that your dear eyes will read what my hand is now writing.

DUKE OF SUSSEX

1843

Prince Augustus, son of George III, and afterwards Duke of Sussex, was twenty years of age when he went to Italy, in the year 1793, for the benefit of his health. It happened that, at this time, the Countess of Dunmore was residing at Rome with her two daughters. With the elder of these ladies, Lady Augusta Murray—some six or seven years his senior—Prince Augustus fell desperately in love, and prevailed on Mr Gunn, an English clergyman, resident in Rome, to marry him to the lady.

Not long afterwards, the young couple on their arrival in England were again married by banns, at St George's, Hanover Square; the issue of the marriage being a son and a daughter. On the death of the Duke, in the year 1843, the son laid claim to his father's titles, but did not

succeed in obtaining them, owing to his father's marriage having taken place in violation of the Royal Marriage Act. At the trial, which took place in the year 1844, the following letters were read, and published in the daily press :—

I.

Lady Augusta to Prince Augustus.

March, 1793.

Then, my treasure, you say you will talk of honour to him. There is no honour in the case; if there is I will not marry you. I love you, and I have reason to hope and believe you love me; but honour in the sense you take it is out of the question.

I cannot bear to owe my happiness to anything but affection; and all promises, though sacred in our eyes and in those of heaven, shall not oblige you to do anything towards me that can in the least prejudice your future interests.

As for honour, with the meaning Mr Gunn will annex to it, I am ashamed to fancy it,—he will imagine I have been your mistress, and that humanity, commonly termed honour, now induces you to pity me, and so veil my follies by an honourable marriage.

My own beloved Prince, forgive me if I am

warm on this subject. I wish you to feel you owe me nothing; and whatever I owe you, I wish to owe to your love, and to your good opinion, but to no other principle.

Tell Mr Gunn, my own Augustus, that you love me—that you are resolved to marry me—that you have pledged your sacred word; tell him, if you please, that upon the Bible you have sworn it—that I have done the same, and nothing shall ever divide us; but don't let him imagine that I have been vile. Do this only, my love; but pray take care of the character of your wife, of your Augusta.

II

Prince Augustus to Lady Augusta.

26th March 1793.

Do, my dearest Augusta, trust me; I will never abuse the confidence you put in me, and more and more will endeavour to deserve it. I only wait for your orders to speak to Mr Gunn. Say only that you wish me to do it, and I will hasten to get a positive answer.

See, my soul, it only depends upon *you* to speak; thy Augustus, *thou* wilt find ready at all times to serve *you*. He thinks, he dreams of

nothing but to make thee happy. Can he not succeed in this, all his hopes are gone; life will be nothing to him; he will pass the days in one constant melancholy, wishing them soon to conclude, and finding every day longer than the other. Indeed, my Augusta, that cannot be the case; my solemn oath is given, and that can never be recalled. I am, yours, my soul, ever yours.

III

Prince Augustus to Lady Augusta.

4th April 1793.

Will you allow me to come this evening? It is my only hope. Oh! let me come, and we will send for Mr Gunn. Everything but this is hateful to me. More than forty-eight hours have I passed without the slightest nourishment. Oh, let me not live so. Death is certainly better than this; which, if in forty-eight hours it has not taken place, must follow; for, by all that is holy, till when I am married, I will eat nothing; and if I am not to be married the promise shall die with me! I am resolute. Nothing in the world shall alter my determination. If Gunn will not marry me I will die. . . . I will be conducted in everything by you; but I must be

married, or die. I would rather see none of my family than be deprived of you.

You alone can make me; you alone shall this evening. I will sooner drop than give you up.

Good God! how I feel! and my love to be doubted sincere and warm. The Lord knows the truth of it, and as I say, if I am not married in forty-eight hours I am no more. Oh! Augusta, my soul, let us try; let me come; I am capable of everything; I fear nothing, and Mr Gunn seeing our resolution, will agree. I am half-dead. Good God! What will become of me? I shall go mad, most undoubtedly.

IV

Lady Augusta to Prince Augustus.

My treasure, my dearest life and love, how can I refuse you? And yet dare I trust to the happiness your letter promised me? You shall come if you wish it. You shall do as you like; my whole soul rejoices in the assurances of your love, and to your exertions I will trust.

I will send to —•—; but I fear the badness of the night will prevent his coming. My mother has ordered her carriage at past seven, and will not, I fear, be out before the half-hour after.

To be yours to-night, seems a dream that I cannot make out; the whole day have I been plunged in misery, and now to awake to joy is a felicity that is beyond my ideas of bliss. I doubt its success; but do as you will; I am what you will; your will must be mine, and no will can ever be dearer to me, more mine, than that of my Augustus, my lover, my all.

HUGH MILLER

1856

On 7th January 1837, Hugh Miller was married to Lydia Mackenzie Fraser, who was ten years younger than himself. At first sight she seems to have made an unusual impression on him, and speaking of her at this time, he says, 'She was very pretty, and though in her nineteenth year, her light and somewhat *petite* figure, and the waxen clearness of her complexion, which resembled rather that of a fair child than of a grown woman, made her look from three to four years younger.' As might be expected, so charming a girl was not without admirers; but although these might be younger and better dressed than the stone-mason, yet they lacked his fascinating individuality which had a particular charm for women. His conversation, too, was the outward expression of a highly refined

intellect, and was rendered additionally attractive by the rich stores of his memory on all kinds of subjects. Hence, Lydia Fraser soon found how vastly superior he was to other men, and that, when compared to him they were commonplace and ignorant. Ere long, accordingly, their friendship ripened into love, and they became deeply attached to one another. It was when things had reached this critical posture that Mrs Fraser, alarmed as to the notion that her daughter might bestow her heart and hand on a mechanic, commanded that the intimacy should be broken off. But on reflection she thought it judicious to cancel her objection, 'reflecting probably that young ladies of nineteen are not likely to cease to love for being told to do so, and though marriage was for the present to be considered as out of the question, the young people were permitted to enjoy each other's society.'

This was a grand moment for him, opening up to him new hopes and high ambitions, whereby he was stimulated to gird up his loins for the race of life. Hitherto 'he professed just what he felt, to be content with a table, a chair and a pot, with a little fire in his grate and a little meal to cook on it.' But now such a humble idea no longer satisfied him, for he longed to give his wife the home and position of a lady. The

following letter which he wrote to Lydia Fraser expresses his feelings at this period—

Cromarty, Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

I am afraid you are still unwell. Your window was shut till ten this morning, and as I saw no light from it last evening, I must conclude you went early to bed. How very inefficient, my L——, are the friendships of this earth!

My heart is bound up in you, and yet I can only wish and regret and—yes, pray. Well, that is something. I cannot regulate your pulses, nor dissipate your pains, nor give elasticity to your spirits; but I can implore on your behalf the great Being who can. . . .

My mother, as you are aware, has a very small garden behind her house. . . . Some eight years ago I intended building a little house for myself in this garden. I was to cover it outside with ivy, and to line it inside with books; and here was I to read and write and think all my life long—not altogether so independent of the world as Diogenes in his tub, or the savage in the recess of the forest, but quite as much as is possible for man in his social state. Here was I to attain to wealth, not by increasing my goods, but by moderating my desires. Of the thirst after wealth I had none. I could live on half-a-crown

per week and be content; nor yet was I desirous of power,—I sought not to be any man's master, and I had spirit enough to preserve me from being any man's slave. . .

Love, I could have nothing to fear from. I knew myself to be naturally of a cool temperament; and then, were not my attachments to my friends so many safety-valves! Besides, no woman of taste could ever love me, for I was ugly and awkward; and as I could only love the woman of taste, I could never submit to wed one to whom I was indifferent, my being ugly and awkward was as an iron wall to me.

No, no, I had nothing to fear from love. My dear L ---, only see how much good philosophy you have spoiled. I am not now indifferent to wealth or power or place in the world's eye. I would fain be rich, that I might render you comfortable; powerful, that I might raise you to those high places of society which you are so fitted to adorn; celebrated, that the world might justify your choice. I never think now of building the little house or of being happiest in solitude; and if my life is to be one of celibacy, it must be one of sorrow also,—of heart wasting sorrow for—but I must not think of that.

From another letter, written a little later on, we quote the following extract:—

I might try long enough ere I could find a mistress so fitted to be useful to me; so little of a blue stocking, yet so knowing in composition. I am glad you are better and that you slept so well last night, even though your slumber abridged your letter. I saw you to-day as I passed your mother's. You were standing in the door with a lady, and looked, I thought, very pale.

O, my own Lydia, be careful of yourself. Take little thought and much exercise. Read for amusement only. Set yourself to make a collection of shells, or butterflies or plants. . . I was sadly annoyed in the steamboat to-night by a sort of preaching man,—one M——, a Baptist. He has little sense and no manners, and his religion seems to consist in finding fault. Of all nonsense, my Lydia, religious nonsense is the worst. . . .

Then, again, he writes:—

You little know, my lassie, how covetous I have become. I have hardly, in the course of my walk seen a snug little house with woodbine on the walls and a garden in front without half

ejaculating, 'Here with my Lydia, and with a very little of that wealth which thousands know not how to employ, I could be happy.'

Well, though not born to riches, I have been born to what riches cannot purchase,—to the possession of an expansive heart that can be sincerely attached, and happy in its attachment, and to the love, the pure, disinterested, unselfish love, of a talented and lovely woman.

Perhaps one of the most striking features of Hugh Miller's letters to Lydia Fraser was the unaffected simplicity in which they are written. Take the subjoined extract, for instance :—

'Here am I once more in my little room. Mother is preparing tea for me. . . . The degree of fatigue caused by walking nearly eighteen miles in a warm day has in some slight degree blunted the edge of my mind, but it has spared my affections—I can love as warmly as ever. . .

Thank you my kind lassie, for your long and excellent letter. I wish you but knew how much I enjoyed it on the first perusal, and admired it on the second. But, my own dearest Lydia, am I not overtasking you overmuch? Do not be so careless of yourself. You are already

much too pale and thin, my Lydia; do not become pale and thinner over the midnight oil. Your mind and body are not, I am afraid, very equally matched; the energies of the one wear out the powers of the other,—be generous, my lassie, and take part with the weaker side.

Write me not continuously, but just a few lines now and then when you chance to be in the mood; now at the grassy side of the *Leap*, now beside the beechen tree; and that I may be able to take your portrait at each sitting, and to revert to the time of it, state over each paragraph the localities and the hour.

Tell me, my Lydia, why is it that I fear so much more for you than for myself? I hold life by quite as uncertain a tenure, and I do not know—for my constitution is by no means a strong one—if I be a great deal less subject to indisposition. But somehow sickness and death do not appear half so terrible to me when in looking forward I see them watching beside my own path, as when I see them lurking beside yours. Do I love you better than I do myself? or does the feeling arise out of one's confidence in one's own ability to resist or endure, which Young describes as making 'men deem all men mortal but themselves?'

It has been said, my own Lydia, that a

philosopher in petticoats is a loveless thing, and when I converse with you in this fashion, it is in the full conviction that few females' minds have been cast in a more philosophical mould than yours; but surely there is little truth in the remark, for never yet was there woman more warmly or more tenderly beloved.

However much he loved Lydia Fraser, Hugh Miller never displays the slighest hesitation throughout his letters in advising her in matters which he considered were for her good. On one occasion there seems to have been a little misunderstanding which occasioned him to write as follows:—

. . . However diverse in our tastes, however different in our opinions, however dissimilar in our philosophy, let us at least *desire*, my own dearest Lydia, to be at one in our religion. Whatever befalls us in the future,—whether from the edge of some solitary forest of the west our prayers shall ascend for assistance and protection, or whether in some happy dwelling of our own land they shall rise in gratitude to Him the benefactor, would it not be well for us, my dearest, that they should rise together addressed to the same God through the same Medi-

ator, and in quite the same way; that each should be employed in seconding the requests of the other, not in internally lodging a protest against them. . . .

Then comes another written in the same old style:—

Where are you at present, my Lydia, or how are you employed? Am I with you as you are with me? or has my idea for a time entirely left you? Would that you were now beside me! . . . When shall we spend our days together? and where? I breakfasted at Inverness with a very happy couple, a Mr and Mrs T——, and, more for our comfort, the husband is fully twice the age of the wife; I, you know am only ten years older than you. The match was a love one on both sides,—in reality, whatever the world may think, the most prudent matches of any.

I saw in my journey a second and still more striking proof of this. J. S—— has several aunts who prudently married men in rather easy circumstances, and one aunt (Aunt Barbara), who was so foolish as to marry a man who was poor, merely because she loved him, and who had little else to recommend him in the eyes of the unprejudiced than the possession of more sound

sense and sterling worth than fell to the share of all the other husbands put together. The match, as you may think, was very rationally deemed a bad one; but somehow, circumstances are less fixed than the characters of men, and it has so chanced that Aunt Barbara's husband holds, at this time, a rather higher place in society than the husband of any of the others; the match has, in consequence become a good one. What if ours, you impudent, foolish girl should yet become a good one too!

As in the case of most love correspondence, this happy couple continued to interchange their expressions of endearment, and by means of the letters which passed between them we can see into the 'happy palace' of love and friendship in which these two abode. The next extract we quote is from a letter of Lydia Fraser:—

'My own Hugh,—I am tired, tired of being away from you. You have no idea of the frivolous fashions to which sex and fashion subject us. I do nothing all day, and hear nothing, yet I am obliged to take the time from sleep which I devote to you.

Why, when I look at him, do I always think of you? or why do his black, bright eyes, that

would be fine had they meaning, always remind me of those gentle blue ones which I have so often seen melt with benevolence and a chastened tenderness? Why are mankind such slaves of appearances as to admire the casket and neglect the gem? It is degradation to the dignity of thought and sentiment to compare it with a mere beauty of form or colour. Good-bye.

It is morning, but I am not beside you on the leafy hill, with the blue water shimmering at our feet. When shall we be there again?

Passing over other letters which he wrote to her, we come to one which is marked by a special tenderness.

I am thinking long for you, dearest, and for the last week have been counting the days—counting them in the style of the fool whom Jacques met in the forest—'To-day is the 19th, the 20th comes to-morrow, and the 22nd will be here the day after.' They will creep away one by one, and Lydia will be with me ere they bring the month to an end.

My heart is full of you—full of you every hour, and every minute, and all day long. I walked last Saturday on the hill, and saw our beech tree, but lacked heart to go down to it;

and I thought it looked dreary and deserted, and I felt that, were I to lose you, it would be, of all places in the world, the place I could least bear to see.

Your grave—but how can I speak of it!—would be a place devoted to sorrow, but to a sorrow not sublimed into agony. I could grasp the green turf to my bosom, and make my bed upon it, but our beautiful beech tree, with its foliage impervious to the sun, and its deep cool recess in which we have so often sat under the cover of one plaid; I could not visit it, Lydia, unless I felt myself dying, and were assured I would die under its shadow.

Many, many thanks dearest, for your kind sweet letter. It is just what a letter should be, with heart and imagination and pretty easy words in it, and yet it is an unsatisfactory thing after all. Instead of consoling me for your absence, it only makes me long the more for you. It is but a pouring oil on a flame that burns fiercely enough before . . . .

My own dearest lassie, why am I so much more anxious on your account than my own? But it is always thus when the heart takes a firm grasp of its object. Man in his colder moods, when the affections lie asleep, is a vile selfish animal, his very virtues are virtues so

exclusively on his own behalf, that they are well-nigh as hateful as his vices.

But love, my dearest, is the fulfilling of the law; it drives us out of our trust of self, and we are made to know through it what it is to love our neighbours, not merely as well, but better than ourselves.

We cannot but regret that a life which commenced under such bright auspices, and was permitted to achieve so much success, should have terminated so fatally. As our readers are aware, Hugh Miller shot himself with a pistol during a fit of insanity, Dec. 24th, 1856.

It may be added that Hugh Miller's wedding gift to his wife was a Bible, in which he inscribed the following stanzas expressive of his love for her.

O much beloved, our coming day
To us is all unknown;
But sure we stand a broader mark
Than they who stand alone.
One knows it all: not His an eye
Like ours, obscured and dim;
And knowing this, He gives this Book,
That we may know of Him.

His words, my love, are gracious words,
And gracious thoughts express:
He cares e'en for each little bird
That wings the blue abyss.

Of coming wants and woes He thought,
  Ere want and woe began;
And took to Him a human heart,
  That he might feel for man.

Then oh, my first, my only love,
  The kindliest, dearest, best!
On Him may all our hopes repose,—
  On Him our wishes rest!
His be the future's doubtful day,
  Let joy or grief befall;
In life or death, in weal or woe,
  Our God, our Guide, our all.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT

1859

Leigh Hunt, unlike the majority of poets, may be said to be a man of one and his just love. Miss Marianne Kent was a little girl with sparkling black eyes, of about thirteen, Leigh Hunt a romantic scribe of seventeen. They met, they saw, she conquered, and he was engaged.

The letter dated Gainsborough, 1806, was written to his betrothed some three years before he married her. At this time he was first beginning to make his reputation as a literary man. The first number of the *Statesman* was to be published on the 26th of February in that year. He may perhaps therefore be excused for some pedagogic advice presented to the object of his admiration in that epistle. And yet the memory of a rupture which was caused by his too great insistance on Miss Kent's cultivation of her

faculties might have given him pause. The young lady we are told 'resented dictations which tended to put a bent upon her own personal feelings and turn of thought.' In other words, she was anxious, like most other young ladies, to have her own way, and when this feminine desire was frustrated, lost her temper.

Leigh Hunt in the first letter quoted, speaks of his journey to Oxford, where he had been to visit a schoolfellow.

Friday, April 22, 1803.

My abode in the University* has hitherto been pleasant, and I hope will be much more so when April chooses to give us some of his smiles as well as tears. . . .

After all there is something else besides good weather which is wanting to complete my felicity; and I need not tell you, my dear girl, that this deficiency will always last while a certain young lady is in Tichfield Street and I am in Trinity College. . . .

Tell Mrs Hunter† that I remember two mothers in my prayers every night and morning, and Mr H—— that I will write him a letter the beginning of next week when I write you a

* Oxford. † Miss Kent's mother re-married.

second; to which gentleman—pshaw, I mean brother—remember me affectionately, as also to Sophy and my sister Betsy,* whom I always wish to have in my heart, but heaven knows, never in my head.

[*Date* 1803 *or* 1804.]

My dearest Marian,—I am very uncomfortable; I get up at five in the morning, say a word to nobody, curse my stars till eleven at night, and then creep into bed to curse my stars for to-morrow; and all this because I love a little, black-eyed girl of fifteen, whom nobody knows, with my heart and soul.

You must not suppose I love you a bit the better for being fifty miles out of my reach in the day time; for you must know that I travel at a pretty tolerable pace every night, and have held many a happy chat with you about twelve or one o'clock at midnight, though you may have forgotten it by this time.

'Oft by yon sad and solitary stream
Sweet visions gild the youthful poet's dream;
Calm as *the*† slumbers in the roseate shade,
Unvarying Fancy clasps his absent maid,
Hangs on each charm that captivates the heart,

* Miss Elizabeth Kent, a younger sister of Marianne. † *Sic.*? he.

The smile, the glance, too eloquent for art,
The whispers trembling as of love they tell,
And the smooth bosom's undulating swell;
Paints the bright prospect of approaching years,
And all Elysium opens to his prayers.'

You see lovers can no more help being poets than poets can help being lovers. . . .

I shall see you again and I'll pay you prettily for running away from me, for you shall not stir from *my* side the whole evening when you return; tell Betsy too that she is a very malicious prophetess, and that if she comes to me again with such ill news as she gave me in her last epistle, I shall pray heaven to cut at least two inches of plumpness from her round face, and at nineteen to give her a husband of ninety. If you are well and *have* been so at Brighton, you are everything I could wish you. God bless you and yours! You see I can still pray for myself. Heaven knows that every blessing it bestows on you is a tenfold one bestowed on your

H.

Monday, 9th December 1805.

. . . You know me incapable of flattery, and will believe me when I say that I was most agreeably surprised by your taste for the pencil, and hope you will cultivate it at your leisure

hour. Nothing so delightfully relieves the more fatiguing exercises of life than such a taste; and I know you will allow me to say that even a tune on the flute, which is the effect of a sister art, may enliven the hour of sickness and of melancholy.

. . . . I dreamt last night that you copied me one of the prettiest flowers from the botanical work as a reward for some tunes I had been playing to you, and that I hung the flower up in my chamber and presented you with some of my best verses on the occasion. . . .

It was absolutely a dream; and where is the wonder that I dream of you? . . .

Gainsborough, Sunday,
23rd February 1806.

My dearest Marian,—Your letter relieved me from much anxiety. . . . Now for my cure of melancholy; my best plan is to think of you, so I sat down the other day, and if you turn over you'll see me.

Epistle to Miss Kent

Written from Lincolnshire, in February 1806.

Lives he who vexed with dull splenetic dreams
Shall shut his eyes because the sunshine beams?
Or when the plain with vernal beauty glows,
Shall curse his stars and sigh for Lapland snows?

Just twice such madness on thy poet fell
When on thy ling'ring lips he sighed farewell;
When first he wandered from those radiant eyes
To wintry waters and* ever weeping skies!
Alas! his eyes but one blest region see—
He fled from pleasure when he fled from thee.

Oft does my fancy to thy presence fly,
Smiles with thy smile and dances with thine eye;
Or by thy side through rich embroidered hues
The shining needle's eager track pursues;
Or o'er thy fav'rite Homer mourns the chief
Who graced the warrior by the husband's grief:
Or in some twilight hour, ere curtains close
And busy tapers mock the day's repose,
What time the moon upon the lifted sight
Through whit'ning casements sheds a lover's light,—
Hears the accustom'd sighs thy bosom swell,
Pensive, not sad for him who loves so well,—
For him who wander'd from thine arms to find
No joy but thinking what he left behind.

What charms thine image in my fancy wears
Cheerful and lovelier from domestic cares!
Let vainer nymphs the public circle fill
Divine their looks, their dress diviner still;
Let them from home as from the smallpox fly,
And never know a blush but what they buy;
Let them believe and thus for once be right—
Their worth like colours lives but in the light;
Let fops in crowds their every glance pursue,
And laugh at all they say, --with reason too:
Be thine, sweet girl! the passion and the praise
To court the shade of calm domestic days,
And by one fond approving voice inspired
From admiration steal to be admired.

* ? omit *and*

Dear are the charms that never long to roam
Beyond the peace, the little heav'n of home!
There in one gay unspotted circle move
Love warm'd with ease, and ease refined by love.
There on* her noblest empire reigns the fair
Whose ev'ry smile her willing subjects share.
'Tis but a narrow reign, but there reside
A wife's best pleasure and a husband's pride.
'Tis but a narrow reign, but holds whate'er
To virtuous man and guardian Heaven is dear.

Ye joys of home! like distant music sweet,
Shall I once more your social welcome meet;
Breathe your blest air, retrace your happy ground,
And with an independent smile look round?
Be ready with your smiles ye joys of home!
Soft on my fair one's presence will I come:
Thoughtful she sits, nor though he fills her mind,
Hears the loved stranger stealing from behind:
Then for a moment will I linger there
To hear her sighs and view her pensive air:
Then kiss her cheek she turns with fond surprise!
Love spreads her arms and animates her eyes;
Words, smiles and tears in sudden transport start;
I clasp th' enraptured blessing to my heart.

I know you will think well of my rhymes, because they come from the heart of your faithful and affectionate

HENRY.

Gainsborough, Thursday, Feb. 1806.

DEAREST GIRL,— . . . I worshipped the

* ? in

magnificence and the love of the God of Nature, and I thought of you; these two sensations always arise in my heart in the quiet of a rural landscape, and I have often considered it a proof of the purity and the reality of my affection for you, that it always feels most powerful in my religious moments—and it is very natural. Are you not the greatest blessing Heaven has be stowed upon me? Your image attends me, not only in my rural rambles, not only in those healthful walks, when escaped from the clamour of streets and the glare of theatres, I am ready to exclaim with Cowper,

'God made the country, and man made the town;'

it is present with me even in the bustle of life; it gives me a dislike to frivolous and riotous society; it excites me to improve myself in order to preserve your affection, and it quenches the little flashes of caprice and impatience which disturb the repose of existence.

If I feel my anger rising at trifles, it checks me instantaneously; it seems to say to me, 'Why do you disturb yourself? Marian loves you; you deserve her love, and you ought to be above these little marks of a little mind.' Such is the power of virtuous love.

I am naturally a man of violent passions, but your affection has taught me to subdue them.

Whenever you feel any little disquietudes or impatiences arising in your bosom, think of the happiness you bestow upon me and real love will produce the same effects on you as it has produced on me. No reasoning person ought to marry who cannot say, 'My love has made me better and more desirous of improvement than I have been!'

. . .* I do not write I acknowledge either the best or the straightest hand in the world, but I endeavour to avoid blots and interpolations. I suppose you guess by this preamble that I am going to find fault with your letters. I would not dare, however, to find fault were I not sure that you would receive my lectures cheerfully; you have no false shame to induce you to conceal or to deny your faults, quite the contrary; you think sometimes too much of them, for I know of none which you cannot easily remedy. Besides, my faithful and attentive affection would induce me to ask with confidence any little sacrifice of your time and your care; and as you have done so much for me in correcting the errors of my *head*, you will not feel† very unpleasant when I venture to correct the errors of your *hand*.

Now, cannot you sit down on Sunday, my

* A refusal to stand godfather. A godfather's duties. † (?) Feel *it*.

sweet girl, and write me a fair, even-minded honest hand, unvexed with desperate blots or skulking interlineations. Mind, I do not quarrel with the contents or with the subject; what you tell of others amuses me and what you tell me of myself delights me; it is merely the fashion of your lines; in short, as St Paul saith—'The spirit giveth life, but the *letter* killeth.' I know you can do this easily and I know also you will do it cheerfully, because it will give me pleasure. . . .*

It is astonishing to me that I could ever be melancholy when I possess friends like these; and when above all, I am able to tell my dearest Marian how infinitely she is beloved by her

HENRY.

Wednesday, 23rd July 1806.

MY DEAREST MARIAN.— . . . *I remembered the dear tender girl I had left behind me.* But when do I not remember her? It needs no injunction on her part to make me recollect my best happiness on earth.

Do not suppose for one instant, dearest girl, that I shall ever encounter the least danger on the water. Depend upon it that I shall not enter

* Concerning Mr Robertson, a friend, and others.

a boat unless the water is perfectly smooth and the weather perfectly fine. How could you ever suppose that I should do what I had told you I would not do? If I were to promise you one thing and perform another, I should never be able to enjoy your society. No, no, the recollection of a single one of your requesting smiles would overthrow all the requests and all the smiles of all the friends and ladies in the world . . .

You know I delight in writing a great deal to you, as it is only another sort of conversation, though I hope to see by your answer that you do not intend to let me have *all the conversation to myself*. . . . I know you like to hear it repeated, or I was going to say that there was no need to tell you how sincerely I am your grateful and affectionate

HENRY

Margate, 30th July 1807.

, . . . Margate is still the same mere fashionable lump of chalk, but it serves for a sort of looking-glass of Brighton, and when I look upon the sea, I think we are both regarding the same object, or that the same waves are destined to bathe both you and me. . . Tell me when you write what time you go into the sea, or rather

into the woolsack, for I do not see the vast benefit that can be derived from bathing in huge gowns of thick cloth. . .* You see I hardly know when to leave off when once I am in your company. God bless you again and again. Your most affectionate

HENRY.

Scaithing Moor, Nottinghamshire,
Wednesday Eve, 8 o'clock.

'So Harry Hunt came to Scaithing Moor,
To Scaithing Moor came he;
And when he came to merry Scaithing,
He swallowed some cho—co—la—tè.'

Well, my dear Marianne,† I am now 135 miles from you, and yet I do not find you a jot further from my heart. . . I take up my pen to converse with you. Heaven bless the inventor of pens and postmen! I happened to meet in the coach when I set off on Tuesday mornin—

Marianne (lifting up two bright astonished eyes).—On Tuesday morning, sir? You must mean Monday morning, sir!

H.—Madam, you must excuse me, I mean Tuesday morning.

M.—Why, sir, you took leave of us on Monday morning.

* Recommends her to read good novels only.
† It is curious that he here spells her name correctly for the first time.

H.—Yes, madam, and the coach took leave of me.

M.—Why, sir, the coach went off at eight?

H.—(With much sorrow). Yes, madam.

M.—And lost half your fare?

H.—Yes, madam.

M.—A guinea and a half?

H.—Yes, madam.

M.—Well, sir, you have only paid a guinea and a half for a lesson of prudence.

H.—True, madam. Some pay as much for a lesson on the fiddle. Which is the most useful of the two?

M.—But, my dear sir, why didn't you return to Titchfield Street?

H.—Why, my dear madam, there is something inexpressibly foolish in going twice on the same errand in vain. I took a place at the White Horse in Fetter Lane, so I slept in Gray's Inn to be in time next morning.

M.—Well, my dear Henry, all is well that ends well. I was afraid at first that you had been detained by a worse accident.

H.—You are the dearest girl in the world, and if you please I'll go on with my story. . .*

I will not ask you to write to me immediately, for two reasons:—In the first place, you had

* Gives the character of a fellow-traveller, a citizen of Lombard Street.

reason to expect a letter from me before this, but I arrived at Wandsford last night at twelve terribly fatigued, and hardly had time to swallow my breakfast there this morning; secondly, I know you do not want asking. Pray let me know how Mrs Robertson is with her pretty little miniature of a girl. Good God! how ought we not to love woman who suffers so much for our being and our happiness! I hope there will never be a moment of your life which will not be a witness to the assiduity and the tenderness of your affectionate and grateful

J. Henry L. Hunt.

In the Garden, Hermitage, Nottingham,
Saturday Noon, 25th June 1808.

My dearest Love,—The Hermitage ink is very bad, but perhaps it will get brighter as it comes nearer you. . . .

Hermits might have been very comfortable for aught I know, but I am persuaded there is no such thing after all as a perfect enjoyment of solitude, for the more delicious the solitude the more one wants a companion. You know what sort of a companion, and you know whom too for me. I know that if you were with me just now, I could forget London entirely, but I cannot manage to forget it while I am alone.

Wednesday Evening, 19th October 1808.

. . . . *There Miss Kent, I need not tell you to put this letter under your pillow.

My next song will be upon the subject of eyes: you know whose. Indeed all my amatory effusions are upon one person, and in that respect they not only differ with, but excel all the song-writers of the day, who are indeed no better than elegant vagabonds after all, they are so perpetually roaming from one girl to another. I have neither sufficient grace nor sufficient gracelessness to be always varying my attitudes and my pursuits in this manner. I am for unity in love you know, as well as in religion, and am determined that my goddess shall not consist, like Diana, of three different persons as well as names. So now you have my love-creed for the thousandth time.

Leigh Hunt was married on the 3rd of July 1809. A license was to have been procured, but the lady was not of age. The bridegroom, with wonderful conscientiousness as the world goes, refused to tell a lie about the matter. This caused delay, and in the letter which he supposed to be the last before their union—in arranging for the day and the hour—he says—

* A poem on 'Love and the Æolian Harp.

'In the midst of the SERIOUS *happiness* I feel on the occasion, the bustle about proctors and licenses, and rings still strikes me as something approaching to the frivolous; but with regard to the clergyman, I would certainly—and I am sure you would—prefer a gentlemanly, reasonable and sensible man for so sacred an office to anybody who comes—perhaps a careless reader, or frivolous, or drunken. As to my brother, I feel so uneasy under deception of any kind, especially towards him, that I think it better—and so does your mother and Mr Hunter—to tell him the whole affair at once.'

Some time after his marriage, Leigh Hunt fell ill. He appears to have suffered from the curse of biliousness. He wisely adopted a spare diet and visited university friends for change, in obedience to the doctors. He writes thus to his wife from Cambridge.

Trinity College, Cambridge,
Friday, 4th January 1811.

MARIANNA MIA,—I arrived here at a little after five last night, with feet as cold as ice, but very comfortable in other respects, in spite of a miserable indulged infant, who pestered us with its noise for upwards of thirty miles.

He goes on to describe the architecture of Trinity College, the portraits of Dryden and Newton, the prayer for the soul of Henry the *Eighth*, which he calls the climax of all mockery, the flat country covered with snow, like paper blotted here and there with ink, and the Cambridge butter made in yards and served in inches, which frozen hard might serve for a ruler or an Italian iron.

He concludes, 'Pray write to me my dear girl as quickly as you can. I promise you that for every one of your pages, I will send you two.'

They had only been married eighteen months.

SIR WILLIAM ROWAN HAMILTON

1865

The lady whom this great Irish astronomer married was a daughter of the Rev. Henry Bayly, rector of Nenagh, in the county of Tipperary. She was of pleasing ladylike appearance, and early made a favourable impression upon Sir William Hamilton by her truthful nature, and by the religious principles which he knew her to possess. In the course of the summer of 1832, she had passed through a dangerous illness, and this event doubtless drew his thoughts specially towards her, and prepared the way for tenderer and warmer feelings. He was lucky enough to gain at once by letter the full consent of the lady's mother to an engagement, but a half consent was all that he could obtain at this stage from the lady herself, who acknowledged esteem and sisterly affection, but shrank

from anything beyond. Towards the end of November in the same year he had an interview with her, after which he 'mistakenly considered her to yield a complete sanction to his hopes.' Afterwards she was detained in Dublin at the house of a friend by severe illness, during which her delicate health added to her natural timidity caused the idea of marriage to become more and more formidable to her. These remarks will explain the following poems:—

Thou goest; but no anguish of despair,
No dark and overwhelming cloud of grief,
Masters my spirit at this parting brief,
Fills all the region of the sunny air,
Where hopes, so late, and pleasant fancies were,
Born of the dear and beautiful belief
That my tost bark should find at length relief,
And the charmed waves to lonely haven bear.
Thou goest—but haply Absence may befriend,
Stirring the slumber of the unconscious heart;
Absence a soft ideal grace may lend,
Bidding the harsh and visible depart:
And Love may on thy maiden self descend—
Ah! blessed *may*! I sink not though we part.

November 18.

A few days later he writes the following:—

'Forgive me, love, that even in the place
Lit by the lustrous atmosphere of thee,
A gloom descended for a while on me,
And half obscured the light, the joy, the grace,
And radiance of thy presence. Fears apace

Thickening between, and their dark company
So shadowing my heart that heavily
Their murky features old I 'gan retrace.
Were it not better to have pushed aside
Those Fears, nor on their long known grimness look?
What, in the very presence of the bride,
Whom to itself so late my spirit took!
Whether that bridal shall be ratified
On earth—O can she such desertion bro[illegible]!

November 21.

On the following day he writes these lines, which show how deep his love was for Helen Bayly:—

Let the sorrow and the bliss
Of this warm and parting kiss
Linger in thy memory
Amid the scenes of infancy.
And in many a lonely shade
Where thy childhood often played,
Let it bid before thine eyes
Visions strange and sweet arise.
And a new diviner bower
By the magic of this hour,
Let it weave for thee alone,
And raise therein a bridal throne,
Meet for so pure and fair a maiden,
One with poet's fancies laden,
One for whom a poet's mind
A wreath not all unseen hath twined,
And suffers now the pain and bliss
Of this warm and parting kiss.
Sitting on that bridal throne,
Let an influence unknown,
Let a wild mysterious gleam

In thy virgin fancy's dream,
Fill thee with a trouble sweet;
And my spirit at thy feet
Grow visible a moment then:
And remembrance wake again
All the sorrow and the bliss
Of this warm and parting kiss.

November 22.

When Hamilton heard of Helen Bayly's illness and of her consequent misgivings as to their union, he addressed to her a letter, writes Mr Graves,* 'conveying to her encouraging assurances in reference not only to this point, but to other important considerations which contributed to her diffidence.' This letter displays in striking combination his tenderness, his self-respect and his religious humility.

FROM W. R. HAMILTON TO MISS BAYLY.

November 26th, 1832.

—— How gladly would I, if I were permitted, minister by your sick-bed to try to soothe and comfort you, and seek, and feel and realise the description:

'Familiar acts are beautiful thro' love,
Labour and pain and grief thro' life's green grove
Sport like tame beasts; none knew how gentle they could prove.†

* Life of Sir W. R. Hamilton, p. 11.
† Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound.'

Though I have watched with inexpressive pleasure the rich bloom on your cheeks in moments of health and excitement, you have interested me not less, though in another way, at times when you looked pale and wan. To you, in my habitual conception of you, beauty and bloom are accidents, very pleasant ones no doubt, while they last, but separable with scarce any injury.

He then assures her that the possibility of her habitual ill-health had been weighed among other possibilities, and had not prevented him from thinking her suited to make him happy, and he continues: —

—— Our Heavenly Father may have provided this new affliction as a successor to the now finished pain of unreturned affection. That pain has preyed upon me for almost nine years: a third part of my life. It is now over; and though its shadow may fall on me again, through the power of awakened remembrance, in some moments of future anguish, it can never, I think, descend again with its former intensity of gloom. Doubtless its chastisement has often humbled me, and the scourging has been that of love, of heavenly and paternal love, making human love its instrument.

And now, if no new pain succeeded, this old

familiar pain being withdrawn it would be no strange thing if a too great exaltation of joy were to undo, for a while at least, the effect of the former discipline, and the teaching of sorrow be forgotten with sorrow itself. But a new sorrow has come, less selfish and perhaps more profitable than the old.

Suffering with you who suffer, I may taste more fully than before the consolations by which you are refreshed. And thus chiefly it may be that my hope shall be fulfilled of deriving religious improvement from attachment to a pious wife. For I cannot pretend to be so free from the pride of intellect and of sex as to be likely to listen with profit to direct instruction from a wife, and it never was my hope that I should learn in such a way.

But while in the intellectual and theoretical part of religion I cannot easily submit myself as a learner, except to those few whose understandings have been long and deeply disciplined by logic and philosophy, I feel that in the more vital part which concerns the heart and will, I need much, very much, instruction and improvement and discipline, and am in no way so likely to receive it as through the medium of affection to a pious woman who is herself under the teaching of the Spirit of God. . . And thus indirectly but powerfully may

you be conducive to my spiritual progress; and not the less for my having to temper the happiness of our recent and mutual confession of attachment with a mournful sympathy in your sufferings of body and mind. . . .

The above letter was accompanied by a set of verses full of exquisite tenderness, an extract from which we quote :—

From the high and rock built tower,
At times I saw the ocean lour;
And on its threatening waves appear
Shapes and auguries of fear.
But each mournful augury
Seemed to threaten only *me*.
She, I thought, was sheltered far
From the elemental war;
From the muffled footsteps heard,
From the phantoms that appeared,
From the boding voice—and lo!
First on her descends the woe;
And the storm, that was to burst,
Strikes her gentle head the first.
Pain and fear have there come down,
And have fixed a thorny crown;
And a pillow of unrest
Is by her throbbing temples pressed;
Pining for a mother's view,
Afar by sickness imprisoned too.
And I, I may not soothe her head,
I may not watch beside her bed;
I may not kiss away the tear,
Nor with fond looks, and footsteps near,

And whispered love, at least express
A part of all the tenderness
Which cannot all be uttered. Oh,
May he who on his children's woe,
With more than human pitying
Looks down, soothe now her suffering;
And from this font of kindness pour,
Fresh healing streams her bruised heart o'er;
And raise her from the bed of pain,
To health, and joy, and love again!

Nov. 24, 1832.

His deep reverence for marriage is charmingly expressed in the next letter wherein he speaks of his intense love for his wife to be.

Observatory. Jan. 26, 1833.

I have been working away at Algebra and Optics, but I cannot go to bed without writing a few lines to you. In many important respects I consider you already as my wife, and experience many of those feelings which Coleridge has described in his poem *The Happy Husband*, among the rest:

'A feeling that upbraids the heart
With happiness beyond desert.'

Not, of course, that any earthly happiness can be without alloy; but that in having exchanged

affections with a person such as you, I have already satisfied one of the deepest instincts and most importunate cravings of my nature, respecting which I said to Aubrey de Vere in February last (having then no hope of succeeding with his sister): 'Nor do I dare to hope that in me while unmarried, the yearning shall ever be stilled for that kind and degree of affection from a wife which I feel that I could give as a husband.'

I have begun an intercourse of sympathy under that form which on earth most resembles heaven, because in time it best represents Eternity, that closest form of sympathy, first given to unfallen man, that cleaving of two together, ordained in the beginning by God, that link so firm and holy, that when once knit no rival or higher duty on earth can cut it asunder, but every other duty of earthly love, of friendship and of kindred, becomes subordinate to this; all old and hallowed claims of father and of mother are pronounced to be obscured by its brightness, and owning thus no higher and no equal among men, and ending with death only, even in its outward and visible form, it images mysteriously a more than mortal union, a love that transcends humanity, an incarnation of eternity in time.' . .

Surely from the time that two have made

known their hearts, and plighted their promise to each other, they are bound by many of the duties, and may enjoy much of the happiness of marriage.

And so I feel with respect to you, married in heart, and passed from the state of a suitor, and filled thereby with deep and tranquil happiness, though longing for the time which is to make you outwardly mine, and to be the beginning of a closer and more complete companionship.

Observatory, Feb. 1, 1833.

. . . . I diverted your sister yesterday by telling her your courageous and candid declaration, that *you* never will be patient Griselda. She said she saw you were in fine spirits, and could fain imagine that she heard you uttering the vow of *dis*obedience. But seriously you know that Griselda was never proposed as a model.

This storie is not said that wivis sholde
  Followe Griselde in her humilite,
For it were importable, though thei wolde,
  But for that every wight, in his degre,
Sholde he constaunt in alle adversite,
  As was Griseldis, whereof Petrarke writeth
  This storie, which with high style he enditeth
For sith a woman was so pacient
  Unto a mortalle man, welle more we ought
Receve all in gre [in good parte] that God hath us sente,

For with grete skille he preveth what he wroughte,
And suffrith us, as for our exercise,
With the sharpe scourges of adversite
Full oft to be betin in sondrie wise,
Not for to know our wille, for certis he
Ere we were borne yknewe our frailte,
And for our best is all his governaunce.
Let us then live in virtuous sufferaunce.'

This is the moral of the tale, and a fine one it is. The character of Griselda is so far unnatural, that we cannot believe any woman would ever have acted as she is said to have done. . . . Nor indeed does it seem possible to conceive that it should ever be the duty of a wife to submit with so entire an abstinence from all remonstrance and advice.

A wife ought not to be a slave, and I agree with Miss Edgeworth in thinking that a man who could desire to have a wife on such terms would not be worthy to have one at all. I *do*, then, *make up my mind*, as you desired me. And yet I must own that I find a great charm in the story; partly, no doubt, from the beauty of the antique style, and the liveliness and the variety of the pictures: but still more (if I rightly analyse my feelings) from the unity of conception which binds the whole together, and the completeness of the unfolding of the one central thought.

Griselda is indeed, as she is styled, a flower

of wifely patience; in her this virtue is developed to such exclusion of all other virtues, or rather to such extreme predominance over them, that she ceases to be a human, but she remains an ideal being, having a nature of her own, though not the nature of woman—a nature perfect in the poet's mind and capable of distinct contemplation, and in this ideality of a mentally possible existence resembling one of Shakespeare's spirits, though not one of Shakespeare's women—an Ariel, not a Miranda.

Grant that her trials were such as no human patience could have endured; grant that a balance of the virtues would have forbidden her so submitting; it still remains an interesting contemplation to observe the isolated working of her one predominant and perfect virtue.

But I confine this interest to poetry and theory, for in prose and practice I expect to come in often for advice and scolding, and am quite content that we should have more than one will between us; for in all matters within their own sphere, I think that women in general, and you in particular, are at least as likely to be in the right as I am; and I hope you don't suspect me of any fancy for playing Marquis.

It would seem that Helen Bayly was at times given to fits of depression, which occasioned him to write as follows:—

February 6, 1833.

. . . I am greatly concerned to find that you are sometimes in bad spirits and gloomy fits. I'll not say, 'Keep up your spirits,' for I know that does not always depend on the will, at least not directly and at once. Yet the will *has* an influence; there is such a thing as *indulging* in dejection, and on the other hand a persevering resolution against such indulgence effects much *in time.*

I may at least urge you to analyse your occasional feelings of gloom, and to try whether they are connected with any cause which I can in anyway remove; or whether they arise principally from neglect (perhaps) of exercise and want of variety. Perhaps in part they arise from a reaction which in those who have already suffered will sometimes arise when they find themselves now surrounded with outward happiness and with hopes and prospects of its continuance.

Something of the same kind I felt very lately when I was sitting a few evenings ago in my dining-room with my books and papers about

me, and thinking how happy I already was in the most important respects, and how much happier I expected soon to be, when I should have you by my side. . . .

Another letter, written three days afterwards, contains some interesting details about his engagement.

Observatory, February 9, 1833.

You may perhaps remember my telling you that I was so much and so agreeably struck by your sincerity in saying, in the summer before last, that you preferred my sister's poems to my own, as to mention it to an English lady, Miss Isabella Lawrence, with whom I had for many years been intimate, our intimacy having begun in a similar instance of candour on her part.

Perhaps I expressed myself too warmly, for she took it into her head that I was attached to you at the time, which, of course, was a wild idea, and one that I soon dispelled. On my return from Bayly Farm, I found a letter here from her, in which she offered me the compliments of the new year; and in doing so, she said, 'As for worldly blessings, I can scarcely imagine there are any left to wish for you, with

one exception only, which I should like you to possess, and find the greatest of all treasures.'

I will not tell you what I said in reply, but for your sake I will copy her answer, giving a holiday to my modesty, which you will say perhaps that I never keep long on any hard duty, poor creature! Miss Lawrence says, 'The contents of your letter have afforded me the sincerest pleasure. I do indeed congratulate you most heartily on the prospect of happiness which is opening for you, and in which I most cordially sympathise. I can scarcely admit a doubt that the lady will know how to value those qualities in you which I place far above those that have justly gained for you worldly distinction, and for whose deficiency no intellectual eminence could compensate.' Really my modesty, little as it is, will not allow me to copy any further, at least, from this letter.

The following beautiful sonnet was the last of his ante-nuptial poems. As Mr Graves says, it breathes an air of thankfulness for the peace which had descended upon a heart so long troubled with unrest, and which now at last anticipated as near at hand the satisfaction of its yearnings for intimate sympathy and affection.

How full of silence is deep Happiness!
Covering the solemn spirit, like the sky
Of midnight brooding in tranquillity;
No Voice presuming feebly to express
Its all unutterable loveliness,
Its still communion with the quiet Eye,
And those clear symbols of eternity,
Mastering the soul with awe, and rapture's stress.
So on my spirit there hath fallen a hush
Of deep and still delight; from Hope and Fear,
Fountains unseal'd so late, no song-streams gush:
But all is quiet, 'neath a concave clear
Of starry night, save one faint eastern blush
Alone half-telling of a joy not here.

February 13, 1833.

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK

1875

Anna Delicia, daughter of Dr John Johnstone, a physician of very high repute in Birmingham, was married to Dean Hook, on June 4th, in the year 1829. Underneath 'her girlish playfulness and sparkling vitality of manner was a deep fund of sound practical wisdom.'

In February 1829, she wrote a valentine in verse to a lady with whom Dean Hook was acquainted under the pseudonym of 'John Bright.' But her handwriting did not escape detection, and on the verses being shown to Hook, he* composed the following reply for his friend, 'which,' says his son-in-law, 'was in fact the first approach to an open declaration of his sentiments.' It is dated February 15th, and is 'a curious illustration of the natural and innocent way in which he

* Life of Walter Farquhar Hook, 1878, I, 163.

passed from things grave to gay,' and has an additional interest from the fact that under the pretext of writing for another he revealed his own feelings:—

Lady, I think that you are right
When Valentines you would indite,
Under fictitious names to write;
And upon none could you alight
So well appropriate as 'Bright.'
Between yourself and all that's bright,
You thus comparison invite;
Let us examine then your plight,
Winning the heart of many a wight,
Those soft dark eyes are beaming *bright*,
And far eclipse the orbs of night;
The Pæstan roses are less *bright*
Than th' hues which on your cheek unite,
Upon that neck (itself as *bright*
As alabaster's purest white)
The locks that hang in ringlets light
As ebony are black and *bright*.
When you are smiling with delight,
Your smile is as the sunbeam *bright*,
Revealing to the enraptured sight
Those teeth than ivory more *bright*;
While the two pouting lips they bite,
Are as the coral red and *bright*,
But brighter far, O far more bright,
The charms within! if brought to light,
They'd prove that you're perfection quite:
A mind with wit and talent *bright*,
A soul so pure that well it might
Be deemed the soul of angel *bright*.
Hence, lady, I must think you right
When you assume the name of *Bright*.

Of the letters written after the marriage we may quote the following extract, which is a fair illustration of others that were written by him.

Oxford, November 3, 1834.

My dearest Love,—I can only find a single sheet of paper in the blotting book, and I therefore write a *billet doux*. I am very well. . . . We went to evening service at Newman's Church; he is, my dear love, the most delightful apostolical man I ever met; I wish you could have been with me at the service. . . . Love to Miss Rose. I long to be at home; kisses to the brats, a box on the ear to yourself. Your reverend husband,

W. F. Hook.



MADAME VESTRIS.

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS

1878

As an instance of how little we know in this world what the future may bring about, Charles James Mathews describes an interesting anecdote relative to his marriage. On his return from Italy, when slowly recovering from a long illness, he paid a visit to the Olympic with his father and mother. At the close of the performance, he was carried down from the box in the arms of his Italian servant, and was invited to wait in the little treasury of the theatre, in order to escape the crowd at the doors. 'After our departure,' he adds in his *Autobiography*, 'a lady remarked to the stage-manager, looking at me as I was lifted into the carriage, "Ah, poor young man, it's all over with him—he's not long for this world!" How astonished would that lady have

been had she been told that she would be my wife for eighteen years, which, however, turned out to be the case.'

The lady in question was no other than Madame Vestris, who was some six years his senior, and to whom he was married in the year 1838. Writing in the year 1876 to a correspondent who had enquired the date of his marriage with this lady, Mathews replied thus:—'You will perhaps think the reason for my not answering you immediately rather an odd one. But the fact is, I could not for the life of me remember the date you desired. Accident has just furnished me with it. My marriage with Madame Vestris took place at Kensington Church, on the 18th July 1838.'

Judging from the letters which Charles J. Mathews wrote to his wife—many years after his marriage—when confined in Lancaster Castle for debt, we have the strongest proof of his devotion and tender love for her. Indeed, his letters are the most charming illustrations of a love, which did not, as, alas! frequently happens, diminish after marriage. The letters we quote below might have been written by an ardent and enthusiastic lover. Thus, when informing his wife of his arrest, he writes as follows:—

Lancaster, July 5, 1856.

My own dearest Love,—In spite of all my hard struggles, I have the sad task to announce to you that I have been arrested and brought here. For God's sake, do not let the news overwhelm you! I know no other mode of acquainting you with it, and think that a long beginning is almost worse than the truth at once. . . .

I leave you to conceive the agony of my despair. But one thought rushed upon me—the thought of you, my poor, suffering, beloved wife. How were you to be informed of it, and what would be the effect it would have on you? I shall never forget that moment. All I have gone through for the last twenty years was nothing to the supreme anguish of that moment. . . . I had never before been within a real *bonâ fide* prison in all its horrors. I will not describe them, my beloved one; I do not wish to add to your misery. . . .

I have telegraphed to Knowles and to Smith, also to Manchester to Knowles's lawyer, and am writing in every direction and to everybody I can think of. I am totally helpless, and in the depths of despair till I know what my fate is to be. Oh what a day I shall pass to-morrow, instead of passing it in my own beloved home. When I think of your state of mind and body,

I dread to hear of the consequences. I will not attempt to preach quiet and calmness—the position is beyond all that; and I cannot expect from you, in your sad state, that which I cannot command myself. . . .

God bless and protect you, my own beloved, adored wife. . . . Forgive me the misery I cause you; I am sufficiently punished.

Your ever affectionate, miserable husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

God help me! a thousand, thousand kisses!

Three days later on, he writes her another tender letter, couched in much the same terms.

Lancaster, July 8, 1856.

MY OWN DEAREST LOVE,—There never was any man in such a complication of miseries. Oh dearest love! what agony I have suffered, and what fresh agony I have to endure. Detainers have come down, and there is nothing left for it but to free myself from the toils. They are indeed vultures, as you call them; and they have increased from day to day and month to month, till the involvement is beyond all human power to extricate me from but the course I have been making such sacrifices to avoid.

For you, you alone, my beloved Lizzy, have

I for so long been battling. I would have shaken off the hornets a twelvemonth ago, but I know the horror you have of such a step, and with reason. I would have worked for the rest of my life with cheerfulness to save you this new shock, but my persecutors are too many for me, and I am unable to stand against them.

. . . . Now pray, dearest, try and look the horrible truth in the face. Send me a list of every little debt of *yours* however small—even to one pound, that I may leave nothing unprepared for, and let us once more sit quietly down free from all such cares for the future. We have now no Lyceum to drag us down again, and in a short time all will be well. . . .

God bless and give you strength to support this present misfortune, and preserve you to enjoy the happiness that I trust will follow. A thousand, thousand kisses, my own dearly beloved wife.

I have your dear picture before my eyes all day. It has been a real comfort to me, and I speak to it and kiss it every night.

Once more, God bless you.

Your affectionate husband.

C. J. MATHEWS.

His wife seems to have contemplated visiting

him, but from the next letter which we quote, it will be seen that the idea was too painful and distressing for him :—

Lancaster, July 9, 1856.

My own dearest Love.—As to the coming here, I can only say it is *madness.* If we could meet, or be together in private even for an hour, it would be different; though to bring you away from your room in your state, and without the power to have the slightest comfort in this beastly town, and away from your doctor, would be to urge you to your complete prostration, and to bring you to your grave at once. But to see you in a stone room, in the presence of a horrid turnkey, without the means of even giving you a seat after a walk of many hundred yards through paved courts and stone staircases, in the midst of prisoners and convicts, would be actually *making* misery of so dreadful a nature as not to be borne for a moment, even in contemplation. You would never arrive to the frightful reality—you would sink in the attempt.

For mercy's sake, let me implore—let me intreat and conjure you to dismiss such an idea from your mind! Think what it would be! . . .

Do, pray do, dearest beloved Lizzy, listen to me, and try to bear up. Think what agony it is

for me to know you are in such an awful state as that Mrs Morrisson describes. It is truly heart-rending, and my feelings are not to be described. I am positively annihilated. God bless you.

Your affectionate husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

A further letter, dated July 19, 1856, the day after their wedding anniversary, is touching and speaks for itself:—

MY OWN DEAREST BELOVED WIFE,—Your reminder of our wedding-day brought the tears into my eyes; for though I may be inattentive to such anniversaries generally, my heart must be made of stone not to care to mind and contrast the happiness experienced on that blessed day and the misery endured yesterday.

Believe me, my darling Lizzie, when I swear that my love for you is as true at this moment as it was eighteen years ago, and that sufferings and your fortitude under all the ills of this world endear you more to me every hour. All this I hoped to have been able to say to you instead of write, but after spending a day of expectation and hope, I have been cruelly disappointed. . .

You will get this on Monday morning, for

though there is no delivery in London to-morrow the post goes to-night, consequently I avoid the annoyance of not being able to write to-morrow. On Monday, I will send you a telegram to announce the judge's decision, and if favourable, shall follow it myself by the first train that starts. It is an age to look forward to, and I cannot look it in the face at all. I am quite broken down and broken-hearted.

This long separation has already unmanned me, and if I have still to remain here, I am sure my spirits and fortitude must give way.

God bless and protect you, my own beloved, adored wife, and give you strength and courage to support our dreadful calamities, better than I am able to do, and grant that we may soon meet to part no more, but to live to comfort each other for the future in peace and tranquillity.

Believe ever, my beloved wife, in weal and in woe,

Your truly affectionate husband.

C. J. MATHEWS.

His efforts for bail proved a failure, and again he writes a distressing letter to his wife, an extract of which we subjoin.



CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS.

Lancaster, July 21, 1856.

My own dearest Love,—With a heavy heart I sit down to announce the failure of my application for bail, and the melancholy fact that I am here for another ten days. All our trouble, anxiety, and expense have ended in this. I must calmly sit down and count the days and hours of my imprisonment, and pray fervently that at least the termination of my sufferings may then be brought about. . . .

Ten days more! What an age it seems! how *shall* I support it? The news, too, of your return of illness was an addition to my sufferings; no letter to cheer me, and the fear for not having one even of dictation, that you were seriously ill again.

Jenny's telegraph to-day, thank God, relieved me a little, and the promised letter of to-night will, I hope, contain fresh assurance that you are better. This bad news, I fear, will again prey upon your poor heart, and cause a return of your pains; and I have nothing to say more to comfort you under this accumulation of misfortunes.

It is a total wreck of all our happiness, and we can only look to Providence to save and restore us again.

I have no other subject to write upon to-day,

I cannot collect my thoughts, or turn them from the one subject of grief.

God bless you, dearest love—I dare not tell you to keep up your spirits—it is a mockery to say such things under such circumstances; and I know from my own feelings what yours must be. I am in the depth of despair and melancholy, and I know not what to do.

Give my love to all my friends, and believe me, my dear, dear beloved wife, your wretched, disconsolate, but ever tenderly attached husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

Another letter written on the following day is equally sad and touching:—

MY OWN DEAREST LOVE, . . I had a weary sleepless night, and was up an hour before the arrival of the post, in anticipation of the hoped for long letter which Jenny's telegraph half promised me; and the sight of Mrs Morrisson's hand was death to my expectations.

Dearest Lizzy, I cannot tell you what I feel at hearing such a miserable account of you, and fear that my yesterday's letter will be calculated to increase your sufferings rather than diminish them. Would that I had some words of comfort to convey to you, but I had nothing but bad

news to send, and no ray of hope to alleviate it.

. . . .

I have nothing more to say to-day, dearest. My life is a blank, and not a soul have I seen, not a letter have I received since early morning. I am worn out in spirit, and will not afflict you with any more of my croaking; it is only adding to your discomfort.

God bless and preserve you, my dearest beloved wife, is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate wretched husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

A further letter written ten days later on, is couched in the same sweet tender strains:—

MY OWN DEAREST-BELOVED LIZZIE,—I trust and hope that my letter of yesterday proved a letter more comforting to you than those of the previous day, and that my promise of bearing up under my misfortunes was more cheerful than my previous complaints and lamentations. . .

. . . I have little more to say, dearest, but to repeat, for the hundredth time, my uneasiness about yourself, though I would not for a moment urge your exciting yourself to sit up or write while quiet and perfect repose are so necessary to

you, and however gratifying it would be to me to see your beloved hand again, I would not purchase that pleasure at so mean a rate as that of disturbing your repose. Heaven grant that the worst is now over, and that you will have no further news to agitate you, and that the next official announcement I may have to make to you may be that I am on my way to dear home.

Cheer up, darling, and be at peace as far as your melancholy state of health will permit, and let the anticipation of our joyful meeting buoy you as it does me.—Believe me, my own dearly beloved wife,

Your truly affectionate husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

He was discharged on August 1st, and the last letter he wrote was to announce the joyful news.

MY OWN DEAREST LOVE,—No need to write a long letter to-day. My telegraph told you all that was necessary. . . .

DEAREST LOVE,—I shall reserve all other matters till I come home. I shall be at the Euston Station at half-past nine. God bless you, my own dearest wife. Thank God! I shall hold

you in my arms again to-morrow. My own beloved wife,

Your affectionate husband,

C. J. MATHEWS.

But his wife only survived a few days after his return, and died at Gore Lodge, Fulham, on August 8, 1856.

A NOBLE LORD AND A YOUNG LADY

The following letters, which passed between a noble lord and a young lady of fashion, at the latter part of last century, were published anonymously. Although the names long since have transpired, yet we have purposely abstained from giving them, in case any representatives of the respective parties may still be living.

In the preface which was published to these letters (1762) it is said,—'The Earl of —— and Miss —— loved, and were impelled to one another with such force, that they could not live asunder; and so they might enjoy the desired society, they cared not what road they took to arrive at it. It is well known, that if this had not been the case, if their passion for one another had proceeded from a sudden gust of lewd desire only, his lordship and the young lady might have taken very different measures from what they did; and it

amounts to almost a certainty, that, had they been under anything else than a fatality, they would never have forsaken their friends, country, and reputation, as they have done.

I.

My dearest dear Girl,—I have been here ten days, almost pestered to death with impatience and business; however, I have at last settled everything, or shall between this and Thursday, as I would have it.

It is impossible to give you any idea of what I have felt, on your account, since I saw you; how contradictory this is! The promise you have given, to do the only thing in the world that can make me happy, has made me miserable. I know your fears, your delicacies, and judge of a thousand other feelings you must have, upon this occasion, by those in my own breast; but as with me love is superior to them all, so I will flatter myself, that the same powerful motive works with you, and expels and overbears every consideration that would come in competition with it.

I have thought, ten thousand times, of what you said to me the night before I left town; how could you at once be so kind and so cruel? There are terms which men and women impose

upon themselves, merely to make them unhappy, and ruin is one of them.

It is true, I swear it by all that's sacred, you are not only essential to the happiness of my life, but the duration of it; I cannot live without you. But do you think that I would suffer your tenderness, your regard for me, to involve you in ruin?

That we shall both incur the censures of the world, I believe, but where is the action, so justifiable, that will not? Happiness is the pursuit of all, and I am determined to make myself happy, without embittering that happiness by reflecting on what the too busy, or too idle, may say of the means I took to acquire it. My dear girl, adopt those sentiments, and, from the day we meet, let us only think of making one another happy.

As for myself, I quit everything without regret, and shall never wish to see England again from the moment I leave it; and yet there is one person whose anger I incur with unwillingness, to whose service I am more attached than anything in the world, except yourself; but this is one of the duties which must be violated by me; and, I do assure you, I am much more sorry for it, than anything I shall lose in consequence. But an event (which I will not wish for, however) may happen, to restore us both to that situation,

in the world's eye, which inevitable misfortune must shortly remove us from. Why, my dear, why cannot I wipe out the transactions of the six last years of my life, which would make three people happy, and injure no mortal alive? I would give half my estate to do it.

The person did not arrive here till late last night, and the poor devil is in such a condition that she must stay a night to rest herself, however, I believe you may depend upon having this on Sunday. In the meantime, I beg, for God's sake, you will make your mind as easy as you can; which I am glad to find by your billet (for your letter is not much more), you are determined to do.

The flutterings you mention, on seeing her ladyship at Court, are natural, but of no consequence; your dear little heart is susceptible of every tenderness; and her speaking to you in a friendly and obliging manner, when you knew that she had reason to suspect, and did suspect, that you wholly *possessed the heart she would, but never can, engage." You talk of her goodnature, her gentleness and sensibility, and with somebody in a foolish play, 'Sure no wife had ever so many useless good qualities.'

I am impatient to see you, and the hopes of

* Something seems here omitted.

soon having that pleasure, almost transport me beyond myself. Depend upon it, my dear angel, that I will be at the place appointed on Thursday night; if your mother should not be well enough to go with you, I wish you would come with a certain person. I would, but cannot tell you, how much I am yours!

P.S.—I smiled at your story about the Horse Book; you have not half so much courage as you would make me believe; that story has betrayed you.

II.

Thursday Morning.

You are angry with me, no doubt, but it was impossible for me to meet you; my mother was not well, and she would not trust me out of her sight; but I shall certainly be at the opera on Saturday.

I long to be out of this house, in short, I am upon the wing, and ready to take flight when you please; and yet, perhaps, if I was to consider every part of your letter, the fears too natural to me would be increased. I will not say what the motives are which work with me; let all that I have suffered, and all that I am determined to do, speak them.

• You will hardly believe that I have been made very uneasy again by the renewal of a certain person's addresses. One should think he had been surfeited so much with his last wife, that he would hardly have an inclination to another meal of matrimony; and his assurance in soliciting me, whom he knows to have refused too many matches, superior to himself in everything but fortune, is insufferable! But I suppose there will be no great occasion for me to make your Lordship any protestations about my resolutions, never to suffer the promises I have given you, to be shaken by any wind that can blow from that quarter.

But the perturbations of spirit which all those things occasion, through a restlessness and awkward restraint to my behaviour, which my father takes notice of, frighten me very much; I need not mention his continual tenderness of me, your Lordship knows it; and though I resolve to forfeit it, yet I cannot think of the loss without tears.

As to what she mentions in regard to time and place, I cannot say anything about it; I give myself wholly to your directions, and shall be guided by you in everything.

You are very obliging for the provision you think of making for me; to be sure, I shall not be able to carry a shred from hence. I have a thousand things to say to you, but am obliged to

write this in bed, with a pencil. If I can find an opportunity to put it down on paper, I will have something for you again Saturday, which you must take care to take unobserved. In the meantime, think of, and pity me,

Your affectionate
and most faithful

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III.

My dear Girl,—What have you done? How could you, knowing the fondness of my heart try it with such a letter, and at this time too; I must upbraid you, I must call you either inconstant or malicious.

Consider I am past tricks; your little arts might do well in the beginning of a passion, but to a settled love that is arrived to the highest degree, instead of increasing it might lessen it, were mine capable of diminution. But I will imagine I have mistaken your meaning.

My dear, dear creature, think no more of that odious word wife; let her be banished from your thoughts, as she is from my heart, let her never appear though but in a dream, to fright our joys or disturb our happiness; let us look forward to

content and pleasure and leave all behind us that contributes to make us bless'd.

Remember that three weeks are past since I have seen you; and three weeks to a man in my situation are a tedious age; 'tis now seven o'clock, the bearer will be with you by eight, and by her I expect permission to see you. For heaven's sake, my dear creature, if you can contrive me this blessing, manage it so that I may see none of the family but yourself, for I must be a longer time with you than will be convenient to be taken notice of, lest they should suspect something which might yet ruin us; but I am so impatient to see you, I cannot live another night without it. Perhaps you may deny seeing me alone through fear; but for heaven's sake, have a kinder opinion of me. Secure me by what vows, imprecations, or ties you please; bind my hands, blind my eyes, command my tongue, do what you will but let me hear you speak three words to me and have the pleasure of knowing myself to be in the same room with you; and, if you will be so kind, give me leave to plead a little for my life and passion. I would fain endeavour to remove your fear, but though I never should be so happy as to succeed it will at least be a satisfaction to me to know that it is not through my own fault that I

am eternally miserable,—My dearest girl, for ever yours.

I have ordered the bearer to wait in the place appointed; but resolve, by some means or other, to see me to-night; her Ladyship is disposed of at next door; the opportunity is lucky, not that I fear her jealousy, but we will not make her uneasy.

Friday Evening.

IV.

Monday Morning.

I do not understand either your Lordship's letter or your message. Can you be jealous of me; can you believe me capable of deceiving you, or of loving another? Why should I pretend what I ought to be ashamed of? But, if you have really conceived such strange imaginations, can I give you a stronger proof of my affection than I have offered? Let me ask you what can I propose to myself, in this adventure, but shame, reproach, eternal infamy and everlasting destruction, perhaps both soul and body!

But I am resolved to stand the shock of all; and therefore intreat your Lordship not to add to my anxieties, by giving me any cause to suspect affectation on your side, by making a show

of passions which I have never given you any reason to feel.

'Tis very true, the person you mention has, by my mother's means, whose favourite he is, had permission to visit here; but how I have received him be you judge, if ever it was your fate to entertain a woman to whom you had an entire aversion. I will not, I hope I need not, my dear Lord, say any more on this occasion.

As to what you mention about my coming to the opera, I will try it; but believe it will be to no purpose, for I am confident my mother will not let me go abroad with the person you mention. You see, my Lord, what a dreadful thing indiscretion in woman is, since title and fortune can't keep off infamy; and what a much greater load, than even her Ladyship bears, am I going to draw upon myself? But, once more I say, I am armed for the worst that can befal me, which is, my being rendered a public talk, who, I've reason to fear, am too much the subject of private whispers already.

I must now tell you of an odd accident; the bearer of your last letter put it between the folds of the ruffles she brought me home, fearing she should have no other opportunity of giving it to me: my mother was in the room, took up the box, and went with it open in her hand

towards the window; the bearer whispered me what was in the ruffles; I declare solemnly I had like to expire in the place. I grew cold, and turned pale, and gave myself up for undone and ruined; but, not to terrify you longer with fears of my danger, my mother contented herself with taking up the topmost ruffle, praised the clearness of the muslin, laid it down again, and went into her own chamber.

She tells me you have turned off your servant, which I imagined before. I saw him sauntering in the Park yesterday; he pulled off his hat to me; I believe I looked silly, but my mother pitied him extremely for having lost your favour. She has a very good opinion of you; I hope you will never give her reason to alter it.

As I am extremely afraid I shall not be able to go to the opera, if you are at the route on Monday, I believe you may depend on seeing me at Charing Cross: but, if a certain person is with me, pray be very cautious because she has of late given me a great deal of advice, and seems to be suspicious.

It should be noted that the last two letters passed between the parties nearly four months before the first two. This elopement seems to have caused the greatest possible sorrow to one

who was really attached to Miss — an extract of whose letter to her we subjoin :-

Nothing but love for you prevented my then informing your father of the fears I was under; but, Kitty, you have deceived me, and I must now, in some measure, impute your ruin to myself. I beg, for God's sake, my dear girl, that, if this comes to your hand, and your destruction is not yet complete, you will return to your disconsolate family.

Consider the infamy of being a prostitute! and yet, in this affair, the act itself is not the greatest sin, but the manner, which carries with it an unusual horror. Consider, my dear, my Lord is a married man, married to one of the most deserving women in the world, and one whom, within these six years, he married for love; was there no other motive to bring you to a right sense of things, think will not the same caprice that induced him to break every law, divine and human, by which he was bound to a person in all respects deserving of him, think, I say, will not the same caprice cause him hereafter to abandon you, to whom nothing but his vices incline him, to whom he is bound by no duty, and in forsaking whom he will run no risks, because you will have no one who will think you worth defending.

I need not tell you, that there is, at this present time in London, an Italian lady of distinction, under the infamous circumstance of a kept mistress, after having been seduced from her husband, her friends, and her country by an indiscreet passion for the Earl of ——.

My dear Kitty, if you can be weak or wicked enough to think his Lordship's love will be a sufficient atonement for the affronts, censures and reproaches it will bring upon you; see upon what an uncertain possession you lay out your reputation and virtue; and once more I say, remember and believe me, there is no lasting faith in him; he that hath once broken his promise solemnly given before God and the world, will be again perjured to Heaven and you, and all mankind. . . . What is past may be got over; it will be only looked upon as the indiscretion of a girl; and a short retirement in the country, with the countenance of your friends, will soon bring the world over to your side; but if you go on, after such a shameful action you must obscure yourself in some remote corner for ever, where honesty and honour are never heard of; you will be loathed, scorned, and abandoned by all. . . . Dear Kitty, return, return! and make all that love you happy; none more so than, Your affectionate, &c.

THE END.